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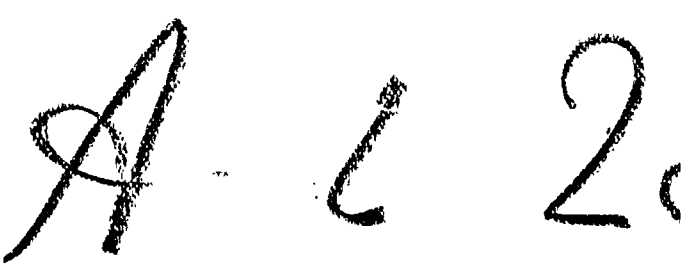
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PRAYERS

WITH A

DISCOURSE ON PRAYER.



PREPARING FOR PUBLICATION.

Uniform with this Volume.

SERMONS

By the late GEORGE DAWSON, M.A.,

Selected and Edited by his Wife.

PRAYERS

WITH A

DISCOURSE ON PRAYER.

B 2828

By GEORGE DAWSON, M.A.

EDITED BY HIS WIFE.



"Prayer is the spirit speaking truth to Truth,
The expiration of the thing inspired."

67711
ac

FOURTH EDITION.

HENRY S. KING & CO., LONDON.

1877.



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TO THE MEMORY OF HIM

WHOM FOR A LITTLE WHILE I SEE NOT.

AND TO

THE STRENGTHENING AND COMFORTING

OF THOSE WHOM HERE

HE COMFORTED AND STRENGTHENED

UNTIL BEING CALLED HENCE

HE WENT FORTH WHITHER HE KNEW NOT

NEVERTHELESS LIKE ABRAHAM WITHOUT FEAR

TO SERVE HIS GOD ELSEWHERE.

PREFATORY NOTE.

SEVERAL of these Prayers were found, written out, ready for the press, for a volume intended to be published.

Some are collated reports from shorthand notes, taken down by different members of the congregation.

Some are copied from recollections by members of the congregation, who had peculiarly accurate memories, and who wrote them down immediately after Services.

Many are copied from verbatim reports by first-rate professional reporters, engaged by friends for the purpose (with Mr. Dawson's consent).

The rest are procured from Miss Beauclerc from the phonetic reports taken down by her of late years.

S. F. D.

KING'S NORTON,
May, 1877.



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DISCOURSE ON PRAYER.

"But thou, when thou prayest, enter into thy closet, and when thou hast shut thy door, pray to thy Father which is in secret."—MATTHEW vi. 6.

THAT splendid old Jewish religion, with its gorgeous ceremonial, its elaborate ritual and robes and sacrifices, was apt to become too much a thing of outward show. It revealed God as King, Creator, Lawgiver, Judge. But Christ, revealing God as our Father, drew away man's heart from these to that sweeter, more holy relationship. We, too, are in danger of making our religion too much a thing of form and publicity. We need to be more alone with God, that we may learn, as only in solitude we can learn, the sweet secret of His Fatherhood. Also that we may tell Him there, as we can never tell it in the presence of others, all the sad story of our guilt and shame

and distress. A natural reserve keeps us from speaking of these things in public save in very general terms, or even from letting the signs of them be seen. There is a sort of unseemliness in marring the decorum of public religious worship by the passionate cry of the sad soul, bowed down with the burden of its sins and sorrows. We must needs be grave and decorous, telling to the God of the great congregation only that which the great congregation may hear. It is to our "Father which is in secret" that our whole sad heart can reveal itself.

We are obliged to treat as "company" even most of those who love us well. We cannot tell them of our sharp peculiar griefs, much less of our guilt, more sharp and bitter still. We must put on our festive raiment, and wash our faces, and go out into the cool air for a little while, that the traces of tears may have time to fade away, before we are fit company for the generality of our friends. Happy he who among them all has one to whom he can bear to tell a little of the worst; to whom, when conquered by sin, he may tell the sad tale of his defeat, and not feel the warm glance of love grow cold upon him.

This is why God would draw us away from the

statelier forms of public worship to seek Him as the "Father which is in secret." In our deepest need, in the sorest humiliation which our sin and sorrow bring upon us, it is not God as a Judge, or King, or Creator that we need, but God as a Father; and it is "in secret" that He reveals to us this sweet relationship, and bids us tell out, like some poor wandering, wayward child, that which only a Father's long-suffering love could bear to know.

What wonders love can do! How the most trivial duty, the meanest, the most loathsome, touched by love's fine hand, becomes a service all reverent and beautiful! How patiently it bears with the discontent of illness, and stoops to the lowliest task! How tenderly it chafes the pained limb, and gives the cooling draught; how gently it bears with the querulous tones of the poor sick one, struggling back to life! Yet even to the love that will do all this for us, we scarcely dare tell the story of our soul's sickness as we tell it to our "Father in secret."

You have seen the little child, after some sad disaster, its clothes all miry and torn, its little hands wounded and bleeding, hide its face in a loving mother's bosom, and sob out the tale of its

woes. And with what tender hand she has smoothed the brow, and laved the hot cheeks, and changed the soiled garments for others clean and white, and made the little wanderer quiet and happy again.

You have seen the erring son return, after sore guilt and stain of sin, to his father's house, cast out by his friends and companions, and alone, in secret, pour out into his father's ear all the bitter tale of his guilt. So we come, travel-stained and bleeding from the rough ways of life, bowed down with the shame of conscious guilt, to our "Father which is in secret." And as the tender mother folds the little one in her arms, and as the father while he was yet afar off, went out to meet his contrite son, so does our "Father which seeth in secret" listen to our sad story and put the life of forgiveness into our souls.

In friendship we prize but little that which we share in common with a crowd. That which the one we love can tell to the whole wide circle of his friends, we care but little to hear. That which he tells to myself alone is my true riches, the measure of his love for me. That was a wise remark of a French writer who said that, "No doubt solitude was very charming, but it needed a friend to whom

we could say that it was charming." This, though seeming but a cold and witty epigram, wraps up nevertheless one of the greatest truths of humanity. The profoundest secret which I possess is of no sweetness or value to me until I have found some one to share it, some one out of all the world to whom I may henceforth speak of that which is only known to him and myself. I value my friend just in proportion as he tells me that which he would not tell to another, nor is it in the nature of the truly loving heart to be content, while yet another shares with it the confidence of the heart which it loves. We would fain draw that friend closer and closer to us, until we both reach that inmost recess of confidence in which there is only room for two. We would fain win him from that broader platform on which we share his love with many, to that sweet secret of communion in which none but ourselves can have a part. In the company of others we seem to know our friends under a different aspect. We see them as the world sees them. We only hear from them that which they are willing for the world to know. But in secret we know them as none beside us know them. They are for us alone, and we for them alone.

It is a deep instinct of our nature, this of longing

to gather to ourselves in quietness those whom we greatly love. Out of the wide circle of pleasant acquaintances how we feel ourselves narrowing down to the three or four, perhaps not so many as three or four, with whom we can feel real fellowship. How in social gatherings, when the evening is far spent, we grow impatient for the mere outside guests to be away, that we and those we love so much may draw together and put away surface talk, and live in the deep content of heart-to-heart converse. And you have, all of you, known those tiresome people who would keep on staying, when you wanted them to go away; people who seem to think it their duty to write *finis* to the entertainment, and who bore you with tedious commonplace when you are longing for rest and silence. And when they were cleared out at last, what a glorious change comes over you! How the very atmosphere seems to lift and diffuse itself, as though some heavy weight had been taken off. And how you draw together and unbend, and how things which could never be spoken in the presence of those common-place people, spring up like flowers when the east wind is gone! How precious is that of which only my friend and I can speak!

Your child too; that which he says to you as you all sit together round the table, or at the fireside, is of small value to you compared with the words, few perhaps, but very precious, which he whispers into your ear when you and he are alone together, which he would tell to none but you.

And then to come from the love of friend and friend, or of father and child, to that other and deeper love, so stained and soiled by our unworthy thinking of it, yet chosen by the Lord Jesus as the most fitting type of His love to us —the love of man towards woman. And he who has loved no woman has never learned to speak truly of the love of God to man. He may be learned in Greek, and he may be able to talk wisely of theological schemes and moral truths, but his best life lies sleeping until he knows somewhat of the deep meaning of that most wondrous verse, "Jacob served seven years for Rachel; and they seemed unto him but a few days, for the love he had to her."

Of that love, then, which speaks our deepest life, how little is it seemly to tell but in secret. Only when the door is shut and the great world far off can the over-full heart find leave to tell even a little of its great love and longing.

So of the soul's life towards God. He beckons us into quietness and secrecy; and that which we could not know or learn of Him in the great congregation where He is worshipped as King, Creator, Judge, He teaches us in the holiness of solitude. Only in secret can we tell Him of our greatest needs. The best and truest instincts of our nature hold us back from making a public congregation spectators of our inmost religious life. We can but tread over the surface, and lightly touch those wide truths which are true for all. The Book of Common Prayer tells as much of man's needs as perhaps is well to be told in public, but he would be very unwise who should say that that Form, beautiful though it may be, tells all man's life, or speaks out all that he would say to God. Its very name signifies that it does but express what he shares in common with others. His real individual life can be uttered for him by no other lips, can be understood by no other heart (scarcely even by his own sometimes), but only by that Spirit whose deepest prayer within us is a groaning which cannot be uttered.

And there, to Him who abroad is a God of majesty, glory, and power, but who in secret is our Father, we tell what only a loving Father's ear can

listen to. The sad story, too sad for any human speech, of our sin and sorrow; the weary, angry, despairing thoughts, which, crushed down as we often are beneath the weight of unintelligible things, have struggled into our hearts, we may speak to Him, knowing that He will not harshly reprove our doubtings, our questions which we dare not ask of man. Wherefore are we made? Wherefore sent here to fight so unequal a battle with sin and temptation, and then to fail, to fall, to be lost? We tell Him how we have striven to do the right, yet ofttimes done the wrong; how the poor offering of our hands has been all too feeble for the willing love of our hearts; how that which we have done is so poor, so mean, compared with what we longed to do. And He, the Great God, no longer terrible in His brightness and glory and majesty, but the tender loving Father, bends down His ear to these our so broken and imperfect whispers, and even as a mother listens to the sobbing speech of her little one, or reads in its dumb sad-hearted silence what the struggling lips cannot utter, so the great heart of infinite love leans down over us and knows it all. "Thy Father which is in secret."

Nowhere more sadly and truly than in *In Me-*

moriam, that sweetest song that was ever sung, does the suffering, searching, unsatisfied human heart, unfold its thought to the "Father who seeth in secret." He who has never carefully studied that book, knows little of modern thought, or of the toil and strife of the true heart, struggling through pain, doubt, and sadness, to that which is after all our only rest—the Fatherhood of God.

This then is the true prayer, not the asking for something which shall make us more comfortable than our neighbours, but the simple letting out of the heart's need to God, its shame too, and guilt and sadness; the sad story of sin striven against yet conquering still; of good resolves down-trodden by low desires; of promises unkept and laws disobeyed; yet through them all the poor human heart still whispering out its deepest, truest utterance, true amid all the sin, and all the disappointment and all the failing, "Lord, Thou knowest all things; Thou knowest that I love Thee."

So, then, God bids you come often from the noise and strife and tumult of life, bids you to come even from the grandeur and circumstance of its public religious worship, and "shut the door," that you may pray to your Father in secret. It is

there your truest life is lived. It is there strength comes for the toil and weariness of life. It needs not long for this; not long to gather round you that sweet sense of Fatherhood which shall make the whole day sacred, and your work a service to God. You know how before you start away in the morning to your toil, you have only time, perhaps, for a loving word or two to your wife, and a hasty kiss for the little ones. But how much love you may put into those few words, and what sweet memory those little kisses leave all the day long. And so a moment or two of solemn speech with God, before the great tide of busy life flows in upon the soul, one short clasp of the Father's hand, one quick glance into His holy loving eyes, will make the whole day sacred. We need no long prayers to bring us the sweet sense of God's Fatherhood, the hidden secret communion of Him who is ever with us. I walk with my friend through a busy, bustling, crowded street, and though I speak no word to him, the close pressure of his hand upon my arm, from time to time, tells me all I want to know. The little child too, holding my hand through a long summer walk: he looks up into my face now and then, I look down into his, and in that look how much is said; what compact

of trust and love, what bright assurance that all is fair and calm and pleasant between us. So a good man walks with God.

But the little child does wrong, and there is no more walking hand in hand, no more fearless look upward to that loving eye. It seeks to be alone, to hide itself. You have seen the little child when it has done wrong, how it steals away and grieves in silence, until the burden is too heavy to be borne; and then it will try to beckon its father or mother away into some quiet lonely place, and there tells out all the story of its guilt and grief. And he is no true father to whom his children dare not come at such times. A parent's love is not for the season of joy and sunshine only. It is the one shelter out of all the world to which, when sore broken by sin and shame, the erring child may come and find an ear ready to listen to its sad story.

So in our guilt and shame, with hearts bowed down for wrong-doing, and eyes that can no longer look joyfully upward, we come not to the great congregation where the glad heart pours out its song of worship and thanksgiving, but to our "Father which is in secret," there to tell Him the sad story which we could find no way to tell elsewhere.

A man who has this consciousness of the sweet hidden friendship of God, will often long to escape from the toil and traffic, or even from the pleasant companionship of life, that he may enjoy it in silence and alone. As you have known some affectionate and simple-hearted child, with a new gift, how carefully it is treasured up in some safe place. How over and over again, many times a day, the little creature will leave its books, its companions, its play, to go where the treasure is. How carefully it will turn it over, unfold it, admire it, find out some new beauty, examine it all over to know that no harm has happened to it, fold it slowly up again, and then come back to the old round of work and play. So the loving soul steals away to its "Father which is in secret," and in many a moment snatched from life's labours or companionships, holds sweet converse with Him. For the love of which we cannot speak, or which we may not tell, is ever a pain to us.

Yet with regard to this interior life, in which the faithful soul finds God as its Father, some men have no conception of it. For them it is simply impossible. Their life deals only with externals. Aspiration, meditation, the silent out-reaching of the soul to God, these are things entirely foreign to

them. Their life must consist in the simple doing of outward duties. These well and faithfully done, God will not demand from them that which they cannot give, the higher, nobler, more loving aspirations of the soul. If your child has no ear for music you do not therefore blame him. You may perhaps grieve a little that so pure and rich an avenue of enjoyment is closed up from him. But the fault is not his, you can only be sorry for him. So, perhaps, the loving Father of us all may grieve for those of His children whom He cannot draw closer to Him, in whom the sense of rich deep fellowship with Himself can never be fully developed here. But let them do their work, let them attend faithfully to the more common duties which are all they can attend to, and it shall be well even with them. Much suffering is hid from them. If they know little of that gloriously beautiful inner life which David has sung of in his Psalms, they also live far off from David's passionate sadness, and the sorrow which for nobler souls is ofttimes even unto death.

"Enter into thy closet, and shut the door." But alas, for those who have no door to shut between themselves and the noise of working life; or who have only one door, and that the street door, which

if it shuts them from outside noise, shuts in upon them only more closely the jar and confusion and tumult within! How shall they ever pray to their "Father in secret," when from morning to night no sweet pause of stillness breaks the noise of life? Have patience! God asks from you no more than you can give. Your daily patient toil is your noblest prayer. And if amidst it all some loving thought of God find room to arise, or even but a sigh, it will be to Him sacred as to some tender mother is the child's sad-hearted glance, telling of longings, dumb, unspeakable; and it shall bring to you rest and comfort from your "Father which is in secret." To you, as to all, the uplifted heart shall bring the heavenly blessing down. "And thy Father which seeth in secret Himself shall reward thee openly."

COLLECTS.

"The pure in heart shall see God."

GRANT unto us, Almighty God, that by increase of love of that which is true, by increase of vision of that which is fair, we may know Thee more; and rising by Thy Spirit's gifts into spiritual pureness, may behold Thee, the Spirit, in spirit and in truth; and so, passing on from strength to strength of human endeavour and human reaching, come to the beatific vision of God, which shall give us perfect peace. Comfort us in the hour of death, and bring us safe to the land of eternal rest. Of Thy mercy hear us through Jesus Christ our Lord.—AMEN.

GRANT unto us, Almighty God, knowledge of Thy will, and obedience thereunto, that we, being guided in our lives and governed in our thoughts by Thee, may be in harmony with

all Thy word and work. Thus may the peace of God that passeth all understanding keep our hearts and minds, through Jesus Christ our Lord. AMEN.

For Spring.

ALMIGHTY GOD, Who bringest forth again the fruits of the earth, be pleased to renew within us, by Thy divine Spirit, the life that the care and cold of this world have caused to fade, that we, bringing forth even in this world the perpetual bloom of faith and hope and charity, may pass into the land of eternal light and life, there to abide for evermore, through Jesus Christ our Lord.—AMEN.

ALMIGHTY GOD, from Whom cometh the spirit of all wisdom, grant that we, here gathered together, though we behold not its coming, may feel the incoming of Thy Spirit. Being lowered to humbleness, yet moved to aspiration, and desiring to conform in all things to the law of the Lord, may we feel the very presence of God. Grant that thus all our evil feelings may be subdued, and may Thy sweet peace that passeth all understanding possess our hearts and minds, through Jesus Christ our Lord.—AMEN.

ALMIGHTY GOD, Giver of the seed and of the soil; of the word and the understanding; of the heavenly life and the earthly vessel; teach us the good husbandry of the heart, so that Thy precious word may bring forth fruit; and that we, having the conditions of spiritual readiness to receive the water of life, may thereby be refreshed for our daily life, and fitted at last for the life eternal. We ask it through Jesus Christ our Lord.—AMEN.

WE magnify Thy name, O God most high for the fulness of the life with which Thou hast surrounded us, for the largeness of the life of nature, for the life of the body, and its bread. And now we beseech Thee for the true knowledge, for the bread which cometh from above, that whatsoever in us is lovely and of good report, whatsoever in us is divine and eternal, being fed thereby, may greatly flourish, to our true eternal gain, and to Thy great glory. Evermore give us this bread; the bread of righteousness, of truth, of purity, of knowledge, and of wisdom, that we, being thus fed from heaven, may live the heavenly life, and lay hold at last upon the eternal reward, through Jesus Christ our Lord.—AMEN.

ALMIGHTY GOD, Whose ear is never stopped, Who forgivest all things to those who cry unto Thee; grant unto us that whatsoever there may be of life remaining for us, we may give diligent heed at this very hour to Thy call; that, so coming unto Thee, we may find work in Thy vineyard, and do it faithfully unto the end; beseeching Thee to forgive the wasted hours of the past, and of Thy graciousness, to see that there be no more. For all time to come grant us to serve Thee diligently and dutifully, that at last we may hear Thy voice saying unto us, "Well done, good and faithful servants; enter ye into the joy of your Lord." So be it unto us all, through Jesus Christ our Lord.—AMEN.

ALMIGHTY GOD, Who knowest the depths of sorrow to which our souls can sink, and the heights of joy to which they may rise; who givest the day and the night; in the time of our darkness send Thy heavenly light, and in the time of our lightness send Thy heavenly joy, that we, being delivered from death, may have the hope of eternal life in holy peace; and notwithstanding all the discord of this life, may pass on our way

through time into that from which we came—the great eternity of God. Hear us of Thy mercy, through Jesus Christ our Lord.—AMEN.

ALMIGHTY GOD, Whose Spirit, teaching the spirit of man, can lift us into the true wisdom, and bring us into true constancy; teach unto us by Thy Spirit, using human language, human love, human thought, and human hope, the great, deep things of God; that we, ceasing to be greatly moved, and stirred not by those things that pass away, may lay hold upon the unchanging truths, the abiding faith, the constant trust of holy souls; and walking in the way of lowliness and lovingness, abide in the Spirit of God; and having that Spirit now, in time, may through Him live eternally before Thee. Of Thy mercy hear our supplications, offered in the name of Christ Jesus our Lord.—AMEN.

NOVEMBER 19, 1876.

GRANT unto us, Almighty God, the good guidance of the light that lighteth every man that cometh into the world, and faithfulness to that light, that we may walk thereby; that thereby walking, we may know Thy will and keep

it; and keeping Thy will, we may enter into life eternal. Grant unto us the light of Thy Spirit, that inwardly inclining ever unto Thy ways, we may be fitted to know them, to keep in them, and to walk in them even to the end; and then, through Thy great mercy in forgiving our sins, we may enter into the rest that remaineth for the people of God, through Jesus Christ our Lord.—AMEN.

ALMIGHTY GOD! to Whom all things belong, Whose is light and darkness, Whose is good and evil, Master of all things, Lord of all! Who hast so ordered it that life from the beginning shall be a struggle, throughout the course and even to the end; so guide and order that struggle within us, that at last what is good in us may conquer, and all evil be overcome; that all things may be brought into harmony, and God may be all in all. So do Thou guide and govern us, that every day, whatsoever betide us, some gain to better things, some more blessed joy in higher things may be ours; that so we, though but weaklings, may yet, God-guided, go from strength to strength, until at last, delivered from that burden of the flesh through which comes so much struggling, we may enter into the land of harmony and of the eternal peace.

Hear us of Thy mercy, through Jesus Christ our Lord.—AMEN.

ALMIGHTY GOD, be pleased of Thy Spirit so to order our knowledge of Thee, that every duty and pleasure of our life, all suffering and sinning, all hope and trembling, may but lead us more and more to a perfect faith and trust in Thee; that understanding what we may understand, and doing that which we do know, we may with a quiet heart leave the deep things of God unsounded. Enough for us to see that what is holiest is best; and that the holiest and best that we can see in man is but the light that comes from Thee, the perfect source of love and good. Guide us in this our course, and give us an entrance into a still higher, diviner, nobler life. We ask it through Jesus Christ our Lord.—AMEN.

ALMIGHTY GOD, in Whom we live and move and have our being, grant that we may feel our life in Thee. Guide all our movements by Thy will. Have our being in Thy love, that, led by the truth, we may find the way, and enter into the eternal life. We ask it through Jesus Christ our Lord.—AMEN.

WE give Thee thanks, Almighty God, for that inward light by which in the midst of outward darkness we may behold, as far as may be, Thy purpose and Thy doings, and see under all things Thy judgment; and being upheld by perfect trust in Thee, in times of evil we may rejoice, and in days of darkness be fearless, and pass on through life in safety, guided by Thy light. Forgive us when we fall away from Thee. Restore us by Thy free Spirit, and lead us all, through the varying changes of life, in lowly obedience to Thy will, safe into the land of the eternal peace. Hear us of Thy mercy, through Jesus Christ our Lord.—AMEN.

GRANT unto us, Almighty God, the peace of God that passeth understanding; that we, amid the storms and troubles of this our life, may rest in Thee, knowing that all things are in Thee; not beneath Thine eye only, but under Thy care, governed by Thy will, guarded by Thy love; so that with a quiet heart we may see the storms of life, the cloud and the thick darkness; ever rejoicing to know that the darkness and the light are both alike to Thee. Guide, guard, and govern us even to the end, that none of us may fail to lay hold upon the immortal life, through Jesus Christ our Lord.—AMEN.

ALMIGHTY GOD, Who day by day renewest the face of nature, giving back again that which was lost; and Who givest the bread of the body by which we are restored unto the vigour of life! Grant unto us, this day, such holy thoughts and pious meditations upon the words of the wise of olden times, and the words of Thy Son our Lord, that they may be to us as food and water renewing our strength, deepening our hope, and fitting us for the struggle to make the spiritual life supreme. Thus being renewed by Thy loving-kindness and mercy, may we continue the strife until the weary years be past and the stain of sin be removed, and we rest from our labours, and the rewards of the eternal peace be ours. Hear us of Thy mercy, through Jesus Christ our Lord.—AMEN.

ALMIGHTY and most merciful God, Who art high, and yet dost stoop to lowly things and to lowly folk! From the height of Thy greatness, with loving-kindness look upon us, and lift us, by the communion of our spirit with Thine, into a living likeness unto Thee. Hear our thanksgiving for Thy mercy, our penitence for our sins, our desire after righteousness, our longing for eternal life. And when Thou hearest these things,

forgive them if they are feeble, cherish them in their littleness, wake them into larger life; and grant us the fulfilment of Thy promises, through Jesus Christ our Lord.—AMEN.

O LORD our God! to Whom shall we go but unto Thee? This world is very fair, but the fairest things so quickly fade! The rose is fair, but it perishes so soon. We, too—our strength departs, our very goodness wearies us. O Lord, we are full of weariness, we have desires which nothing in this world can satisfy. But since it is Thou who hast given them to us, let them be to us an earnest of that immortality which Thou hast promised to all who by patient continuance in well-doing seek therefor. And then, O Lord, we are such divided beings! At times we love the right, at others we do that which we ought to hate. But if Thou wilt touch our hearts, unite our hearts, then will we fear Thy name. At times we have such visions of the heavenly land that, like Thy apostle, we say "it were good to build here tabernacles." But the vision fades away, and we must come down from the mountain to find only sick people waiting to be healed. To whom, then, shall we go but unto Thee, O Lord, to pour out the story of our griefs? If

we tell them to our brother, we fear to weary him; if we go to the strong, he cannot understand our weakness; if we go to the weak, we do but increase the load he has himself to bear. We come to Thee, O Lord! We rejoice that Thou art never weary. We bless Thee that Thou knowest us altogether; and we pray that Thou wilt fill us with a strength not our own.—AMEN.

ALMIGHTY GOD! Thou Who art the Life of all life, who hast made man from the dust, and Thyself hast breathed into him the breath of life, help us in the strife between the soul and sense, between the earthly and that which is divine. When the lower life within us seeks to join itself to the dust whence it came, then, in that, the soul's sore need, Good Lord, deliver us! And when that which is heavenly in us, conscious that its origin is in Thee, strives to raise itself from these fetters of flesh, do Thou, Lord God, draw us gently, mightily towards Thyself. And this we do ask, in the name of Christ Jesus our Lord.—AMEN.



ALMIGHTY GOD, comfort us by Thy fulness. Our strength is but weakness, our knowledge is but small, our wisdom is as nought, our vision narrow, our life but passing away. By Thine eternal wisdom, Thine unshaken power, Thy constant years, Thine unfailing love, uphold and comfort us, that we, ever feeling that our little lives are altogether in Thee, passing on with quiet heart, and penitent spirit, and loving soul, may look forward to the ending of this mortal life without fear, longing for, and hoping for, an entrance into that large, abundant Life, where God shall be all in all. Of Thy mercy hear our supplications, and grant us Thy peace, through Jesus Christ our Lord.—AMEN.

ALMIGHTY GOD, grant unto us such knowledge of the written and spoken word of God and Man, as may give us understanding of the Eternal Word which was with Thee in the beginning, by which all things were made. May we, through the things that are made, oft-times pierce to the things of God, and by the very beauty of that which Thou hast expressed, learn the eternal beauty and unbroken blessedness of Him from whom it comes. May Thy word and work alike conspire to teach us Thy thoughts; that we may

grow in wisdom and favour with God and man; and carry through this life, so often bowed down by petty cares and troubles and by man's meanness, the heavenly beauty, the glory of paradise and the hope of restored glory. Grant to us such knowledge of Thee, that we may keep Thy way; such love of Thee, that we may shine with Thy beauty; such communion with Thee, as shall brighten our hope, strengthen our faith, increase our charity, and bring us at last through this life into the full peace of the life to come. Hear us, of Thy mercy, through Jesus Christ our Lord.—AMEN.

ALMIGHTY GOD, Who dost never change, grant that from Thine unchangeableness may come our fixedness; and as year by year passes away, and the touch of change, and the frost of age, and the shadows of the Valley of Death come upon us, ever in Thine unchanging wisdom and love may we find a refuge. May we abide with quiet heart, knowing that in life and in death we are ever within Thy loving care, leaving to Thee the things that are too high for us, and the wisdom that is too deep for us, and looking forward fearlessly, blessing Thee that Thou givest us light enough for our day's work,

hope enough for the night of darkness, life enough for love, until our great change comes; after which, lead Thou us in the paths of eternal peace. We ask this through Jesus Christ and in His name.—AMEN.

ALMIGHTY GOD, in Whom is no darkness, grant unto us Thy light, that we may walk therein. Grant that we may know Thy will, and by keeping it increase our light. Where there needs must be darkness, grant to us that what we cannot see we may be content to trust Thee for, that in all our ways, being guided and guarded by Thee, we may be kept from falling, and pass at last through the gate of death into the life eternal, through Thy mercy in Jesus Christ our Lord.—AMEN.

ALMIGHTY GOD, Who canst give the light that in darkness shall make us glad, the life that in gloom shall make us joy, and the peace that amidst discord shall bring us quietness! let us live this day in that light, that life, and that peace, so that we may gain the victory over those things that press us down, and over the flesh that so

often encumbers us, and over death that seemeth for a moment to win the victory. Thus we being filled with inward peace, and light, and life, may walk all the days of this our mortal life, doing our work as the business of our Father, glorifying it, because it is Thy will, knowing that what Thou givest Thou givest in love. So, with these inward thoughts, may we keep that divine light in the soul which shall enable us to set our spirits in order, and walk in obedience and trust, not failing to look forward with great hope. Bestow upon us the greatest and last blessing, that we, being in Thy presence, may be like unto Thee for evermore. These things we do ask, in the name of Jesus Christ our Lord.—AMEN.

ALMIGHTY! if Thou givest us prosperity, give us also that true joy which a wise man wins therefrom. If Thou givest us sadness, help us to look beyond that sadness to the rest which remaineth. Help us in whatever state we are to look beyond it to God, and around it to man; that so, being full of reverence toward God, and of good service toward man, we may fulfil Thy will always.—AMEN.

ALMIGHTY! may Thy word and its warnings, Thy saints and their experience, Thy promises and Thy reproofs, go before us and keep us in the way. Let us never be like those foolish virgins who, rising in haste to meet the Bridegroom, were turned back with the bitter words, "Too late! too late!" Do Thou, by Thy Holy Spirit, like a pillar of fire go before us, ever showing the true way; in grief, in joy, in sadness, in gloom, ever before us. That so at last, having journeyed through all this great and wide desert, we may of Thy undeserved mercy find rest.

And these things we do ask in the name of Jesus Christ.—AMEN.

ALMIGHTY! Who art so great that our human hearts cannot clasp Thee, we gladly turn to that revelation of Thyself which Thou hast given us in Christ Jesus our Lord. Help us to read that Gospel which Thou hast written in our daily life. How the little child looks up to the strong man! His ways are not the child's ways; his thoughts are not the child's thoughts. It cannot understand, it can but trust him. Yet it lays its little cheek to his, and, nestling upon that great strong breast,

knows that it is safe. So, oh Father! we would cling to Thee, and in Thy sweet embrace forget our sadness.—AMEN.

ALMIGHTY GOD! we come unto Thee now, beseeching Thee to hear us, and knowing that Thou wilt hear us; only feeling that our desires are too weak and our prayers not strong enough. Almighty God! we come to Thee for Thy special blessing, trusting that Thou wilt give Thy good gifts to us, beseeching Thee to teach us how wisely to use the gifts which Thou hast bestowed. It doth seem strange that we should ask of Thee to give us Thy good gifts, and at the same time wisdom how to use them; but so it is: pearls may be cast before swine, and so Thy good things may be bestowed on ungodly souls. Almighty God! Thou sowest the seeds of truth every day; Thou sendest down the gentle rain, and the glorious sunshine; Thou givest the Holy Spirit of Christ, which is life and health for all. Grant that we may be of those who reverently receive of Thy good gifts: may they be planted in a gracious soil, out of which they may bring forth fruit to Life Eternal.—AMEN.

MERCIFUL GOD, grant that while we humbly bend our bodies in token of what we profess to feel, our spirits may also bow in reverence to Thee, the Almighty God. Let our closed eyes and our ingathered thoughts just now remind us that we are addressing the invisible God, and though unseen, His blessed Spirit is around us and among us. And if there is in our minds or in our thoughts, aught that is evil; if frivolity, vanity, silly speech, or silly thoughts possess any of us, even for the moment, let Thy Spirit—gentle, yet solemn—cast out all such folly. By Thy good Spirit purify our hearts of all that is ungodly and untrue.—AMEN.



PRAYERS.

Morning.

ALMIGHTY GOD, we bless and praise Thee that we have wakened to the light of another earthly day; and now we would think of what a day should be. Our days are Thine, let them be spent for Thee. Our days are few, let them be spent with care. There are dark days behind us, forgive their sinfulness; there may be dark days before us, strengthen us for their trials. We pray Thee to shine on this day—the day which we may call our own. Lord, we go to our daily work; help us to take pleasure therein. Show us clearly what our duty is: help us to be faithful in doing it. Let all we do be well done, fit for Thine eye to see. Give us strength to do, patience to bear: let our courage never fail. Help us most when faintness comes: hold us up when

weariness begins. When we cannot love our work, let us think of it as Thy task; and by our true love to Thee, make unlovely things shine in the light of Thy great love. The little things of those we love are precious in our eyes: sweet is service when the Master is beloved. The costly ointment grew to greater worth spent on the feet of the Lord.

When men or things are contrary, and our spirits are vexed and our hearts fall faint, let us think of Him who endured contradiction of sinners against Himself. When our work seems mean, our calling but obscure; when pride asks some greater thing to do; when we chafe against service and rebel against rule, may saving thoughts come quickly to our help—thoughts of Him who made Himself of no reputation, and took upon Him the form of a servant. When the spirit is willing and the flesh is weak, Good Lord, help us! When the fear of danger, or the shrinking from pain would hinder us, Good Lord, help us! When interest beguiles or indolence besets us, Good Lord, help us! When pleasure smiles and bids us come, when duty cries and bids us stay, Good Lord, help us! Help our weak wills to choose the right: keep us to our toil till the evening; then bless us in our pastime, and

lead us to our rest. Help each to do his own work; to learn his own task; to bear his own burden. May the ruler rule in righteousness; may the servant obey with faithfulness. Be with the child at school; help Martha in her serving; and bring us all, like Mary, to sit at the Holy feet, and choose the better part that cannot be taken from us.

Bless us in the hours of rest; make pure and sweet the pleasure that comes after pain. Bless our bread; bless our cup; bless our bed; and may this day, its sins all pardoned by Thy forgiving love, carry for us some treasure to the land where moth and rust do not corrupt, and where thieves do not break through nor steal.—AMEN.

Evening.

O THOU, Who dost neither slumber nor sleep, be Thou our Keeper while we rest. When dead in sleep even to ourselves, let us be alive unto Thee. Watch over us as mothers watch their sleeping babes; and wake us in the morning, again to praise Thee, again to renew our daily work. If strength or success,—if the praise of others or self-content have made us boastful, vain, or proud, may the helplessness of our sleeping hours teach

us lowliness, and remind us how our lives hang altogether upon Thee.

If sleep forsake us, or slumber come not, may sweet thoughts be ours; thoughts of Thee and Thine ever-watchful eye; thoughts of Christ and His undying love; thoughts of the Spirit, the Comforter; thoughts of those that loved us in our youth, of those who love us now; thoughts of the great Day of waking, when we shall meet, never to part again.

In our warm bed let us not fear to think of that cold and narrow bed in which we shall all one day be laid. And when our last hour draws nigh, may we in peace lie down, to sleep the Sleep that men call Death; sure that, if we have lived to Thee, we shall die in Thee, to rise again in newness of life.

Forgive the sins of this day, and of all our past days; help us to cast the cares of to-morrow upon Thee, that thus, freed from sin and free from care, we may, as Thy little children, lie down in perfect peace. Help us to forgive all who have hurt us, or given us offence: we would not have the sun go down upon our wrath.

If it be Thy Will, let us wake in health and strength; but if this poor prayer shall be our last,

and not for us again shall shine the morning light, Thy Will be done! Let us depart in peace, our hearts being stayed upon Thee.—AMEN.

For the First Day of a Year.

"Bless the Lord, all His works in all places of His dominion: bless the Lord, O my soul."—PSALM ciii. 22.

WE give Thee thanks, Almighty God, that we know where "all places of Thy dominion" are; for we know that Thy dominion is over all. And now we beseech Thee to teach us that far more difficult lesson—to "bless Thee" in "all places of Thy dominion."

In the pleasant places of Thy dominion it is easy to praise Thee: in the happy times of our lives, when our loved ones are around us, and our homes unclouded—in those places of Thy dominion we will not fail to give Thee thanks.

But when we are sad and sinful; in the wintry time of our lives; in the dark night-times, when joy dies out; when the flowers are cut down and withered; when the glory and the beauty of the earth seem passing away; when the things that once were warm have grown chill; when the shadow of death is upon us, and the very heavens

are hid from our weary eyes; then, even then, in those places of Thy dominion, teach us to praise Thee. Teach us that the darkness and the light are both alike to Thee.

Help us to look upon the unknown To-morrow as only another "place in Thy dominion;" governed, ordered, overseen by Thee. Help us to bless Thee for the Future, knowing that it shall be, what the Past has been, a record of Thy love.

When the clouds gather round us, and from man we have scant hope, then let us have all hope from Thee. Be Thou ever present with us. Behind Thy back, nought can live: cast Thou our sins of the past year behind Thy back. The coming year is dark before us: we know not which of us shall walk before Thee in this, Thy land of the living, for one more year. But help us, Thou, O God, to think of the land beyond the grave—on the other side of death—as a "place of Thy dominion;" a place unknown to us, untrodden by us, but known to many who have loved us, and are loved by us; belonging to Thee, our King; belonging to us, because we are Thy subjects, and unto us Thou givest "all places of Thy dominion."

In tender childhood Thou didst lead us. Now, when older children, Thou wilt lead us still. For

the past, in the present, in the future; in the day-time, and in the night-watches; in the day of blooming, and in the day of fading; in the dark valley, and in the glorious haven after the passage of Jordan; yea, in all "places of Thy dominion," Lord, will we praise and bless Thee, our God!

So let it be with all of us, through Jesus Christ our Saviour.—AMEN.

For the First of January.

O LORD, we thank Thee that again we have seen the glory of the changing year, the sweet promise of the spring, the glow of summer, the wealth of autumn, the warmth and tenderness of the winter's home. We thank Thee for all the glorious show that Thou hast unfolded before us; for hours of communion with Nature, when, through this fair veil of earthly things, we have seen Thy great glory shining in upon us.

We bless Thee for quiet hours, when the soul in solitude has been filled full with Thee; for sweet thoughts which none but ourselves have known; for songs in the night, when Thou hast held our eyes waking. We bless Thee for the good that others have done to us; for that which

we have been enabled to do for others; for the tenderness and love we have received; for that which we have given; for sin conquered; for wrongs which we have forgiven.

And now we stand upon the threshold of another year, and we know not what may be the end thereof unto us. It may be in sadness and loneliness, in bitterness and desolateness; we cannot tell. But, having Thee with us, all will assuredly be well. Our child-hand held in Thy strong and loving grasp, what can even the weakest of us fear?

We know that, for some of us, our last year has this day dawned. Some feet, now standing here, must pass through the dark valley before its close. Almighty! in that hour let Thy love be our strength. Let us remember that, as is Thy greatness, so is Thy tenderness; as is Thy strength, so is Thy pitifulness and so Thy mercy.

Grant unto us that peace which passeth understanding; the peace of God, Who, in that He seeth the end from the beginning, possesseth that which flees from us who trouble our hearts about the things whereof we know so little,—those things whose issues, because they are unknown to us, do cause us to fear.

But, knowing so surely that all things work together for good to them that love Thee, may we wait patiently and toil quietly, though the waiting be long and the toil be hard. For Thou art our Guide, and Heaven is our home.

Grant that our death may be the peaceful ending of a noble story, the quiet Amen to life's long prayer.—AMEN.

"The long-suffering of the Lord is salvation."—2 PET. iii. 15.

ALMIGHTY GOD! all our lives long do teach us that Thou art long-suffering. We call to mind our broken vows and unfinished work, the blossoms that never brought forth fruit, the unheeded prayers of others, the teaching that never came to good, all our foolish desires and wasted passions, all the wine poured out in wrong places, all the worship given to false gods, all the hours that might have been full of preciousness, all our negligence of duty, all our backslidings and sinnings, our faintings, and failings, and fallings. Our lives do indeed teach us the long-suffering of the Lord! For if Thou lovest us—and Thou canst not be our Father without loving us—what hast Thou not endured? Thy forgotten ways, the far-

off land to which we have wandered, and the foolishness thereof, the husks of the swine of which we have had to share,—Thou hast indeed been long-suffering! Forgive us, not because Thou hast suffered, but because of Thy long-suffering; not because Thou hast borne and endured, but in another, sweeter, better sense than that. They that feel not for us may have borne with us, and they that loved us not must have endured us; but when we praise Thy long-suffering, we know that it is of a love which bears and forbears, that, by-and-by, Thy child may come back again. Thine is the long-suffering of the divine patience that knoweth our frame, and remembereth that we are but dust; Thine is the Divine patience that can wait so long, and yet not grow weary; Thine is the tender pity that after so many falls, yet lifts us up; Thine is the infinite patience of which Thy Son spake, when he encouraged us in patience one with another. "How many times," says the poor niggardliness of the human heart, "shall my brother offend against me and I forgive him?" "Yea, I say unto you until seventy-times seven," says the boundlessly generous love Divine.

Lord God! Long-suffering! have mercy yet with

us, for we shall try Thee yet. Not till our poor souls have been tempted again and again; not till our eyes are closed in their last sleep; not till those that love us shall weep their last and saltest tears for us; not till we are safe from the allurements and passions of the world; not till the mourners mourn for us; not till we come to the grave; not until the end, will our follies and failings cease. Yet, even unto the end, Thou yet wilt love us, and beyond, and for evermore.

Let the memory of this Thy love not make us careless; but rather inspire us with a divine watchfulness—a constant out-looking and guarding. Because Thou hast loved us so much, let us not try Thy love again: but let Thy love keep us from trying Thy long-suffering. Let us not presume upon it; but rather be moved by it, that we may give good heed unto our ways, and have the divine fear ever before our eyes.

Lord God! when out of patience with ourselves, as oft-times we are; when, weary of our work, we come to think that we might as well cease from it, for there seems to be no fruit of all our labour, and we cry, like that sad soul of old, "Now, O Lord, take away my life, for I am not better than my fathers!" when the fire of life is dying down,

and the ashes of the old fire threaten to put out what little there is left; when the world has no new thing to teach; when the lights of life are dim, and when the oil of life has run out; Lord God! at these times let us think of Thy long-suffering, that the burdens thrown down in dull despair we may take up again with fresh courage; that we may sing again Thy songs, and tell one another of Thy patience and long-suffering, and so comfort one another, even unto the end.

So, when the last sound shall be heard, grant that it may be the call home, and that it may be given to us all—not through our merit, but of Thy mercy; not through our endurance, but through Thy patience—at last to hear Thee cry, "Well done, good and faithful servant: thou hast been faithful in a few things; enter thou into the joy of thy Lord."

Grant us these things; we ask them in the name of Jesus Christ our Lord.—AMEN.

Before Christmas.

O THOU! of Whom the prophets have spoken as of a God who carest for this world which Thou hast made; provident, foreseeing, far-seeing; Thou Who preparest rain for the earth; Who, when Thy Son was to be manifested to the world, didst prepare for Him a body; Who, when He was to teach, didst send Thy messenger to prepare His way; teach us to prepare our hearts for this heavenly Guest, whose coming we are about to celebrate; that by deeds of thoughtful charity and love, we may make ready for Him who is the God of Love. Grant that we may cast out of the temple of our body all that doth defile, that so it may be a meet abode for Him who once did tabernacle in the flesh among men. Let us so trim our lamps, that when the festal portals shall be opened, we may go joyously in, to feast with the Bridegroom.

And at this glad season, let us for awhile still the wail of woe, and the song of sadness, and lift up our hearts in more rejoicing strains.

We would thank Thee for each noble thought that has dwelt within us; for each throb of gratitude and love to Thee. We thank Thee for each

hour when, untrammelled by man's poor criticism, we have joyfully in Thy word held communion with Thee.

We bless Thee for all the sweet influences by which the harshness of our lives is tempered, for the love of friends, for wife and children, for the merriment of music, for the loftiness of art, for the depths of science.

And for those who cannot be with us to swell this chorus of rejoicing praise,—though with the bodily ear they may not hear our song, yet let the strain of sadness be stilled in their hearts, and some sweet song sing itself within them.

Grant unto us the preparation of the heart, that when Thou knockest, we may with gladness rise and open. Let us cast out of our hearts all malice and uncharitableness, that so we may fitly, if not altogether worthily, receive our heavenly Guest; that, walking lowly towards God and charitably towards man, we may joyfully celebrate His coming.—AMEN.

For the Last Sunday in the Year.

WE give Thee humble and hearty thanks, Almighty God, that in the same want and weariness that they of old did know, we have the same comfort and consolation that they of old did feel. "Comfort ye my people!" is still the need of our souls, and by Thy unwearying love we would be comforted. Earthly comfort is short, and passeth away as the clouds: the clouds come again after the rain, and come so soon! But when we look unto Thee, Thou failest never, Thou faintest not, we cannot out-weary Thy patience, we cannot overtax Thy strength. O Lord God! we comfort ourselves in Thee: Thou watchest whilst we sleep, Thou sleepest never, and as Thine eye watcheth all things, so Thine unsleeping love cares for all. So we comfort ourselves that whether the days be few or many that we have yet to run, the years of our life are all within Thy mercy, all within Thy care. We beseech Thee, let Thy people be comforted. Look upon those who specially need Thy comfort, because they are greatly sad; look upon those who mourn that death hath come, or who look for his nigh ap-

proach; look upon those who mourn beside the grave; look upon those who grieve over a faithless love; those who weep for the sunshine never returning; those who mourn with a grief that saps the mind. Comfort Thy people, O God! Comfort us with the great hope that Thou wilt wipe away all tears from our eyes; comfort us with the good. hope that we shall see that wondrous day, when all evil shall be worked out, when all sin shall be purged away, when the world shall become regenerate, Paradise come back, and God shall be all and in all. That this may be so in us, fill Thou us with Thyself, that in lowly loving and longing we may pass the days of this our earthly state, looking forward to the good day when we shall pass beyond the gates of death, safe into eternal life.

For all that Thou hast done for us during the year that is now fast closing, we bless Thee. For all that we have left undone that should have been done, we ask Thy mercy. For all the things that we have done that should not have been done, hear our ashamèd cry—"Have mercy upon us, miserable offenders!" For whatsoever there has been in us that was comely and lovely and of good report, we bless Thee. For all the beauty

that we have beholden, we bless Thee. For all the riches of human love that we have gathered, we bless Thee. For all the sweetnesses of life that we have had, we give Thee thanks. For the sorrows and troubles that have come to us, we bless Thee, for, through those sorrows, blessings have come to us; and pain and trouble have taught us to sing the Lord's song in the night. We beseech Thee to let Thy blessing go with us, as it ever hath done, restraining us more than it hath done, and filling us more with Thy Spirit than before; that so, those of us who are going down the hill toward the west, may find our last days to be our best days; and though the glory of youth is over, let the beauty of age be ours, the palm-branch of victory, the white stone of those whom Thou hast chosen.

And now we are approaching another year, let us enter it with gladness, as into a time when God may be known, as into a place where God may be met without fear and without trembling. Fill us with hope; give us the Comforter; feed us with the bread of the soul; give us the manna by which the body may be sustained, and give us also of the manna, the hidden manna, that only the secret soul can

know. Love us all, and bring us all at last, when all the wearinesses and all the blessings of this life are past, not of our merit, but of Thy mercy, safe into our desired haven. We ask it through Jesus Christ our Lord.—AMEN.

When a Fall of Snow had Darkened the Skylights of the Church.

"There is one body, and one Spirit, even as ye are called in one hope of your calling; one Lord, one faith, one baptism, one God and Father of all, who is above all, and through all, and in you all."—EPHESIANS iv. 4—6.

GRANT unto us, Almighty God, the One Spirit of love, that all times may teach us, all things instruct us, all holy souls be of our communion, and that we may have fellowship with all those who have loved Thee and done well.

One Spirit be with us, the Spirit that was with the men of old, though varying in form. Whatsoever we read of ancient times, of the burning bush, and the fiery pillar; whatever we read of the men of old, and of those things that they beheld; let them nevertheless set forth to us the One Spirit of God.

Above all things, this day show Thyself to us as the true and only light. And let outward things teach us. May the gloom over all to-day teach us of the gloom that comes over Man's spirit when the clouds of earth have been to us stronger than the fires that be above. As we see that the mists and gloom are born of the uncultured valleys of the earth, teach us to see how much of the mist and gloom in our lives goes up from our own doings; from holiness forgotten, from pureness cast aside. And as we know that the sun shall break through again in beauty, and gladden us all with his glorious light, make us know that when the Sun of Righteousness shall arise, He shall bring healing on His wings.

Lord God! shine upon us, that we may have light enough to find that which we have lost. Which of us would not take a candle to find the things that were, and are not? When we have lost Thine image, then give us light; light that shall pierce through all the caves and chambers of the heart; light that shall light up the dark places; light that shall reveal the corners where the hidden things can be found; light enough to come home to Thee when we have wandered; light to carry us to Bethlehem, where the Holy Child was born;

light enough to pass through the dark Valley when death shall come; light enough to enter into the eternal bliss.

When the darkness that is upon us comes to us in the loss, not of righteousness, but of those we love; when lovers and friends are gone, and the stars that once gladdened us are seen no more; then let Thy heavenly light shine upon us. When youth departs, and strength decays, and friends get few; when, deserted and sad, we measure our journey by the dead that are gone from us, rather than by those that are left; then let Thy light come from above. When the eyes grow dim, and desire fails, and the heat of life dies down, and the blood grows chill, and faith is faint; when darkness comes because the shadow of death is upon us; then let the light of God shine upon us, that our poor trembling steps may be guided in safety; then glorify the western world, light up for us the setting sun.

When we walk in crooked ways, and find them much bemired, be a lantern unto our feet, lest we stumble. Above all, let the light of the House of God shine out when we have wandered away from home, and are striving to come back. Always give us light; light to run the race that is

set before us; light to do Thy work, before the night cometh in which no man can work.

When Thy light seems too bright to be kindly, and is too fierce for our sins, spare us not; but light Thy light in our hearts, until that light shall kindle a fire in which all idols shall be burned, and all false things purged from us, that we may serve God in pureness and gladness of heart.

Now, Lord God, every day and at all times this is our prayer:—hear us now, for the day comes when we may be dumb and cannot speak; when the heart may burn, but the tongue may be stiffened;—Now and for ever; in life and in death; in the daytime and in the night; in loneliness and in crookedness; in weal and in woe; in sickness and in health; in the morning, at noontime, and in the evening, let there be light!

Give us the light of God, and all shall go well. Of Thy mercy hear these our supplications, through Jesus Christ our Lord.—AMEN.

A Prayer in Springtime.

"Benedicite, omnia opera."

WE join, O God! in the blessèd strain Thy holy children sang of old, when, filled full of gladness and Divine glory, they all met to sing Thy praise, to praise Thee as a God of glory, and to magnify Thy mighty Name. We too would call upon all things to praise Thee, and join the song poured forth unto Thee by the sweet birds and the flowers, and by all Thy works in nature.

If into this sweet song sad notes do creep, Lord God! forgive the sadness of our cry. Thou hast marked out for us a strange path, in which there is sunshine and shadow, light and darkness, sickness and sorrow, sadness and death. Yet, Lord God! we give Thee thanks that in our saddest hours Thou hast given us heavenly comfort, and shed upon us the light of Thy Divine brightness; and in the midst of depression and sorrow, Thou hast uplifted us, and given us to drink of the cup of God, drawn from the river of the water of life which is by Thy throne for evermore. Give to us the faith that shall blossom in the night, and grant that the eyes so dimmed with weeping and the

souls bowed down by the hand of death, may hear the still small voice of the Comforter.

To all of us, give joy. Some have it; we praise Thee. Some have it not; we adore Thee. "The Lord gave and the Lord hath taken away. Blessed be the name of the Lord!"

Now, we beseech Thee, pour upon us Thy sweet light, that our hearts may be gladdened, as our eyes are this day by the light of the sun. Lord, we have longed, we have desired, we have pined, for want of the light that these eyes of ours can behold. Would that we desired the Light of lights as we have done Thy sun! But as surely as the one doth come, so shall the other. Let the brightness of this day be but a prophecy to us of what shall come when the sun of God shall shine upon all waiting souls, when those that love darkness shall learn to wait still longer, and those that love the light shall rejoice.

Lord God! there are flowers that need to be opened in us, sweet blossoms of charity and peace; shine upon us by Thy light, that they may give forth their sweet odour; shine Thou upon the rich, upon their golden blossoms of wealth, that others may share their honey and brightness; shine upon all loving souls, that their boundless

treasure may go forth in blessing to others; shine upon the wise, that they may speak words of holy wisdom; shine upon little children, that they may have a joyous childhood, the remembrance of which they shall carry with them when the days grow dark; shine upon those that work, that they may make honey whilst it is day. Sun of God, shine upon us, that we may be lifted up from all meanness of spirit, and living in the light of God, the beauty of the Lord may be upon us. Lord God! when the sun shines, mean things grow bright in its beams and dull things grow glorious; shine upon us, that all meanness and unfaithfulness may be killed; that dark things may slink away, and sweet things come forth. We give Thee thanks, hearty thanks, that Thou hast given us once again to see the fair blossoms and smell the sweet fragrances that tell of coming glory; to behold the mild Spring that tells of the glorious harvest. Now we beseech Thee, establish the work of our hands, that in good time we may behold the fairness of Summer and the rich bounty of Autumn, that, walking amongst these things, we may gain a double blessing, the blessing of beauty, and the blessing of holy teaching. Thus, made wise by all things, may we in lowly godliness

hold on our way even to the end, then give us an abundant entrance to the life eternal. This we do ask in the name of Jesus Christ, our Lord.—AMEN.

ALMIGHTY GOD, Who art all and in all, give us who submit ourselves to Thine incoming, so to feel within us Thy presence, that we may know the Spirit of God, which is leading us towards all that is holy and good, lifting us above all those things which, if not rightly used, gain undue mastery over the soul; and giving us goodly hope, if it should so please Thee, that in better days and in longer, more restful hours, we may live continuously in Thee.

Almighty God, Who art to the weary rest, and to the restful strength, be unto us as a pillar of fire in darkness and a pillar of cloud in seasons of brightness; in weariness grant unto us to rest in Thy mercy; in the day of our strength to consecrate ourselves to Thy purposes, that in all times and seasons of our lives we may remember that we are close to God. In evil and sinful days may we feel Thy mercy in our punishment; in goodly days, Thy strength in our righteousness. Let the

joy of the Lord be our strength in time of praise, and let the weakness of our humanity be our strength in time of supplication. Help us to find guidance in the words of the inspired wise souls of old, that so, being uplifted by Thee above all these present surroundings, we may pass on with cheerful godliness, till the work of this mortal life be done and we go to our own home. Hear us in Thy mercy, through Jesus Christ our Lord. —AMEN.

ALMIGHTY GOD! we use the same prayer and lift up to Thee the same supplication as Thy child did of old, when he cried unto Thee: "Lord! Lift Thou up the Light of Thy countenance upon us!"

Almighty! teach us where is the Light of Thy countenance, and what it is? May we behold it in all the goodness and brightness there is in Nature; and more especially may we see it in all the goodness and truth there is in Man. May we know it to be the Light of Thy countenance when the conscience is tender and the tongue speaketh for that which is righteous and just and good and true. May we see the Light of

Thy countenance when the little babe doth smile and seem to tell of a home the soul hath once been in, from which it hath brought the holy sweetness, scarce of this earth. May we see the Light of Thy countenance when the sea shines with wondrous brightness, when the sun is upon it; the Light of Thy countenance in the putting forth of the beauteous things of the earth; the Light of Thy countenance in the faces of those that love; the Light of Thy countenance in the glory of friendship; the Light of Thy countenance in the splendour of genius; the Light of Thy countenance in the ripples that come over the face of those who are stirred by the divine things of Art. But teach us that the sweetest Light of Thy countenance is that which speaks of love and pity, of mercy and truth. Let us watch the mother as she leans over her child and sheds upon her little one that sweet light of love, and know that there is seen the Light of Thy countenance. And as we read in the stories of old that the face of the first martyr of Christ shinèd with the light of Heavenly brightness, teach us that it was the Light of Thy countenance that was upon him. And when men speak things that are deep and true, just and right, and the face doth shine and the countenances of those to whom

they speak grow bright, may we know that it is the shining of the face of God; for, Lord God, they saw of old, after Moses had spoken with Thee, when he came to speak to the people, his face did shine: he beheld Thee and shone,—he spake and was glorified. And when Thy Son was upon the mountain and for a while transcended time and space, He too shone with the Light of the countenance of God.

Lord God, look upon those to whom this world is dark: pity the lonely and sad-hearted, the forsaken and forgotten, the penitent and remorseful, the sinful and the miserable: teach them that the Light of Thy countenance can find its way through prison bars, and pierce through the thick black clouds of misery. Show them of little hope, the bow in the cloud: how it is made by the light of God shining upon the darkness of earth. So shine upon our steps and so shed the Light of Thy countenance upon our tears, that we may see the bow of Hope glorious in the cloud, giving us hope that above and beyond this world of trial and change there may be days of happy rest and fields of Heavenly glory: that we, through all this mist and darkness of time may still have the shining Light of Thy countenance upon us, and though

we may not be happy, we may yet have the blessing of Almighty God.

Help us to learn the true deep wisdom that righteousness exalteth a nation, and that the true life of Man is in his conscience rather than in his thought: that the deepest and truest life, the life that saves men, is the life of justice, righteousness and truth. And being fully convinced thereof, strive above all things to build in righteousness, "foursquare in truth" according to wisdom and justice, by the lines of verity, that so built up in righteousness, we may stand in strength and end in glory.

Of Thy mercy hear us, through Jesus Christ our Lord.—AMEN.

"The sacrifices of God are a broken spirit: a broken and a contrite heart, O God, Thou wilt not despise."—PSA. li. 17.

ALMIGHTY GOD, we give Thee thanks that Thou hast taught us that the sad results of sin may be made by us a true sacrifice to Thee; and we beseech Thee that all the wrong-doing of our lives may lead to the broken heart and the contrite spirit. Above all things, save us, Good Lord, from hardness of heart and impenitence of

spirit. From the hardness that knows at last no difference between good and evil; from the hardness of heart that can sin without suffering, do evil without pain, Good Lord, deliver us!

Almighty! when the contrite spirit is come, and when evil hath brought forth its bitter fruit, touch, with Thine hallowing hand, the bitterness, and make it give forth the sacrifices of God. We give Thee thanks, that what for us is most wholesome, is to Thee most acceptable; and we pray Thee, all-comforting God, that into the heart, broken by evil, the sweet balm of Thy grace may be poured.

Of Thy mercy look upon all of us according to our needs. Accept the joyous thankfulness of those who are glad, to whom life is just now bright, who have nought to sorrow for, in that their sorrow is far away.

Look upon those whose hearts are troubled, to whom the many burdens of life bring dimness of vision and darkness of soul. O Lord, have mercy, and grant that those of Thy children who suffer and are sad, may ponder on the Spirit Thou hast promised should come—Thy Spirit, the Comforter; and may the Holy Dove brood over them with such sweet softening comfort that they, being lifted

up thereby, may once again praise Thee and say, "It was good for us that we were afflicted."

Look upon those who are strong, and full of life and vigour, to whom this world is full of lustre and temptation and brightness. Look upon the young man; grant him the full vigour of youth. Teach him that there is no sight so fair as the strong spirit obedient and dutiful; vigour bowing down to meekness; the lofty head stooping over the sad; the pride of man all humbled before God.

Look upon Thy children who are old, over whom the long shadows have begun to creep, who feel that the splendour of other days is gone, that the fine gold has become dim. Grant unto them inward light and peace. Let them hear sounds that they could not hear in days of old, and may the shine of heaven be upon them.

Look upon the little children. Lord, love them, suffer them to come to Thee, and let them teach us, as well as be taught by us, that we may all know what the Master meant, when He said, "Except ye become as little children, ye cannot enter into the kingdom of heaven."

Lord God! in the days of darkness bless us all, and so make us wise and lowly-hearted that in our last days we may be able still to

behold Thee, and learn to sing Thy song in the night, and in the storm, in sickness and in death. And when our last hour shall come, as come it must to all of us, may we with quiet spirit say, "I know in whom I have trusted;" and so pass beyond this earthly scene, and receive such as Thou givest us, confident that whatever God gives is, for us the best. Thus quietly dying in faith and passionately longing to be delivered from this burden of sin and temptation, may we pass on to the regions of Heaven, unto the last pureness and glory of God.

Of Thy mercy hear our supplications, through Jesus Christ our Lord.—AMEN.

PSALM cxlviii.

WE give Thee thanks, Almighty God, that a soul so great, a heart so warm, as his who wrote those Psalms of Israel, gave us a measure of Thy praise when he calls upon all to praise Thee.

We thank Thee for that great rejoicing cry, that summons of all to praise Thee; for but for it we might fear to take Thy name upon our stained lips. Lord God! if the storm and vapour, the hail and the wind, may praise Thee, may

not we complete the joyous song? But, Lord God! these obey Thee; they go whither Thou biddest; they come when Thou callest; but we, rebellious and unclean, shall we sing the song of the Lord? Thy broken law doth dull our strain. Thy forgotten sweetness robs our song of blessing. Shall Thy praise be sung by the unholy, and may Thy name pass our sinful lips? We hear Thy great, sad, sinning, glorious child of old declare that Thou shouldst be praised according to Thy goodness. Lord God! if Thy praise depend upon our goodness, short the measure and feeble the strain; but if according to the measure of what Thou hast given to us, then loud the song and full the strain. So we will praise Thee according to Thy goodness. So, O God most holy! we sinful souls shall not be dumb.

The sea roars and the winds do cry according to their laws; but when Man redeemed lifts up his song of thanksgiving unto Thee, then, Lord God, Thou hearest what nowhere else Thou dost hear. When Thou forgivest a sinner, Thou shalt hear a song that the angels cannot sing—the song of those whom Thou hast redeemed. Sweet the song of innocence, blessed the song of the unfallen, but wondrous deep the song of those

come back to Thee. Sweet the song of the child who has never left his home, but deeper the song of the poor prodigal returned, the song that trembles almost to breaking, that moves the heart almost to dying. Lord, we can offer Thee this song of the prodigal son returned, the song of home-coming, the song of the delivered, the praise of the free.

Take Thou this, O God most loving! and help us ever to praise Thee with the praise that none else can offer; the praise that the angels cannot give, the praise of man saved, man redeemed, man brought home to God; the cry of the sheep come back to the fold, of the child safe home to the father's house; the song of the poor prisoner when the night of bondage is over and the morning of deliverance breaks upon him; the song of the prodigal son come back to the father's love and the mother's kiss.

So, Great Lover of man! may we, sin-stained, travel-worn, and wretched, yet bring to Thee a praise to which our sadness shall lend sweetness. And if there be times when our voice is too broken by grief to lift itself up to Thee, still let us sing unto Thee the song that hath no words, the inward song that needeth not to be expressed;

that so, of all Thy children, not one may miss Thy praise.

Bring us all at last, O God most merciful! O Father most pitiful! into the Life where we shall sing Thy praise more fully, into the land where our trembling voice shall shake no more, where we shall lift up unto Thee the cry of the redeemed, "Not unto us, but unto Thy name be the glory!" Give us now some words of the eternal song, and at last take us to Thyself, and may we be Thine for evermore. Of Thy mercy hear us, through Christ our Lord.—AMEN.

O LORD our God, our Maker! Life is strange to us! This Thy world is so fair, we Thy creatures are so faulty! The harmonies of nature are so sweet, the bells of our lives are so jangled, out of tune, and harsh! There is a music of the spheres, but we cannot hear it. There is a wisdom which through all strife and doubt and mystery foresees the end, but that wisdom is not ours. We may not hear this music; we may not know this wisdom; but we may walk as little children in the light which Thou dost give us, and so, one day, all shall be well.

There is so much that we wish to know, so little that we can know; so much that we wish to see, so little that these poor dim eyes can look upon. Our questions are so many, Thine answers are so few. Sometimes it seemeth to us strange that we should wish to know so much, and stranger still that Thou shouldst tell us so little. But grant that this little that we can know may be so well learned that the knowledge of it may enter into and beautify our lives; and the little we can see may be so earnestly looked upon, so clearly understood, that we shall not miss our way at last to the open vision of Thy perfect Will.

Father! we know nothing, save that we are in Thee, and surrounded by Thee. Let that suffice us. One day Thou wilt round these cares and strifes, these doubts, these sorrows, these longings, into Thine own everlasting calm. What can we understand of this unfulfilled perplexing thing, which we call Life? Meaningless are the movements of the dancers' feet to him who hears not the music to which they fall. No purpose is there in the weaver's toil, to him who cannot see the slowly-growing pattern unfolding itself beyond. We see the labour and the toil, but we see not the golden thread of Thy purpose weaving above, beneath,

into order and beauty. We see the strife, the hurry, the confusion, but we hear not the music to which this mazy dance of life is keeping time.

Fain would we listen for one wandering note of Thy celestial harmonies, but Thou hast willed that we may not; and sadly yet patiently we turn our wearied heads, and go on in the silence which must be best for us, since Thou hast willed it so.

Forgive us when we cannot be at peace; when the heart will question, when the mind will doubt. In that Thou hast given us spirit, Thou hast given us restlessness. Pity us, when seeking, we cannot find.

Give to us a sure trust in Thy Changeless Will, which underlies this changing life, and guides it to a noble ending. Be it enough for us that Thou dost hear the music to which our human sense is deaf; that the light of perfect love and perfect wisdom shines upon the path which to us is oftentimes so dark. In our darkness may we be content that Thou dost know it all. In strife and discord may we still ourselves with the thought that over all there broods unheard by us, the eternal harmony of Thy Will. Thus may we watch, thus may we wait, until at last for us shall dawn the glorious, the long-wished-for, the

Eternal Day. And these things we do ask in the name of Jesus Christ.—AMEN.

"Spare me, that I may recover strength, before I go hence, and be no more."—PSALM xxxix. 13.

WE beseech Thee, Almighty God, that we, too, may recover strength before we go hence and be no more; for all of us have suffered loss, and have had feebleness; most of us have known sickness; all have known sorrow; the strength of many is not what it was; beauty decays, and we know that our best estate is but vanity. Still, we would recover strength; if not the strength of the body, or the youth and lightsomeness of early days, or the fairness of manhood, yet may we have that strength which oft-times comes through feebleness; that inward hidden life, the avenues to which are oft-times weariness, and waste, and loss. For if we know Thee and that Thou lovest us well, then, through all the decay of outward things, there comes the light of God, the shining of the eternal world, and the sweet comforting of the Spirit. May those of us who have suffered the loss of the things of this life, make that loss our greatest gain.

For the earthly riches we have lost, may the heavenly riches be more sought after, loved, and known.

As the strength of the body lessens, let the mind take up the glorious strain, even the song of a manhood given up to God. When whiteness comes over the head, and slowness comes to the foot, and the back is bowed, and the chills of age are in the body, then may the song of the deliverances of God, of the desert passed, of sin forgiven, of temptation triumphed over, of learning won, of sin overcome, be unto us a better song than that of prophecy and hope, which was the song of our morning-time.

Grant that all our waste and weariness, all our want and woe, may but lead us to a deeper insight of Thy lovingkindness, a truer understanding of the Spirit's joy, a more sweet knowledge of the Holy Spirit, the Comforter, and a greater longing for that free life into which, if we walk with Thee, we shall be delivered by the hand of death.

We beseech Thee, Almighty God! Healer and Comforter of man's sorrows, that not only those things which we have suffered in the body, and the outward losses and pains of life, may bless us; but

also may the evil that we have done become to us the solemn gate through which, in penitence and sorrow having gone forth, in joy and rejoicing we may return. We beseech Thee to make us wise, that no dead past may have power to detain us long; teach us to let the dead bury their dead; show us that it is better to stand up and do right than to sit down and mourn over what is wrong; give us not sackcloth and ashes, but help us to gain again the height from which we never should have fallen. Help us to turn from the dead things that are past, and to give them all to Thee, and, in newness of heart and freshness of courage, to do the things that we have hitherto left undone.

Whatsoever foolishness or folly may have been ours, grant that in every sense we may find that it was good for us that we were afflicted, for before that we went astray, and, though it was an evil thing to fall, yet only through falling have we known the true Physician, only through our wandering have we known Christ as the good Shepherd. Grant, Almighty! that for every one of us our falling may end in safety, that at last the song may go up from our lips, that strongest, strangest, sweetest of all man's songs, the song of the delivered soul; having passed through darkness

and death into the pure light of love, through the great love wherewith Thou hast loved us. Grant unto every one of us the blessèd spirit of charity, that, pouring into all our actions the spirit of the Divine love, they may become sweet, holy, and blessed deeds. May we set forth that love by giving help to all who are in sickness, in sorrow, or in sadness. Grant such increase of skill to those that are learned, and such patience to those that are poor, that ere long we may see many of the ills that weary this world pass away before the light and love of the Lord. Of Thy mercy hear us, through Jesus Christ our Lord.—AMEN.

O LORD GOD! Strong and Mighty, we would draw near to Thee, confessing our weakness, beseeching Thee to make us strong. We would be strong in body, that we may do our work in life well and cheerfully; that we may help the weak, and put a strong and willing hand to the burdens of those of us who have more than they can bear.

We would, O Lord, be strong in heart; full of courage, fearless of danger; holding pain and danger cheap when they lie in the way of our duty. We would be strong in love: make us warm-hearted,

true friends, tender lovers, loving our neighbour as ourselves, and loving Thee with all our heart and soul and strength.

We would be strong in faith; believing Thy word and Thy promises; ever trusting in the victory of good over evil; ever confident that all things work together for good to them that love Thee.

We would be strong in hope; undaunted by seeming defeat; ever looking beyond the mists and clouds of time, into the clear shining of the eternal life.

We would be strong in patience; bearing our burdens, suffering our pains quietly and without reproach toward man, or rebellion against Thee.

We would be strong in voice; to sing Thy praise, to magnify Thy Name, to resist evil, and to be a terror to evil-doers, and a praise to them that do well. Oh Lord, strengthen us daily to do and to bear, to suffer and to hope, to fight the good fight, and at last to lay hold upon the crown of Life Everlasting. Hear our prayer, O Lord, who art our strength and our Redeemer, for Jesus Christ's sake.—AMEN.

ALMIGHTY GOD, by Thy Spirit teach us what is wise and what is foolish; what is noble and what is mean; what is eternal and what is passing. And if Thou findest in Thy search of us, that not Thy greatest things are our greatest, that not the sweetest things of Thy world are sweetest to us; have mercy. Ill-born, ill-trained, diseased, suffering from sickness of soul and feebleness of body; made of the dust, cut down like the grass; short our life, dim our eyes, troubled our spirits, how, Lord! shall we always go right? And yet Thou art patient, and teachest us.

Send us Thy comforting Spirit, that we, first being comforted, and our tears dried, and our sad hearts cheered, may give the open ear of a child unto Thy sweet teaching, and learn that the foolishness of God is wiser than men, and the weakness of God is stronger than men.

Almighty God, look upon our timidity. We dare not claim that we are Thine, and yet, teach us that in Christ Thou didst take possession of humanity, and that by the inspiration of Thy Spirit, we may take unto ourselves Divinity. When Thou didst send to us Thy Son, Thou tookest us to Thyself. Now we ask Thee for Thy Spirit, that we may

take Thee to ourselves; that so, God descending, and man ascending, Thou our Father, and we Thy children, we may learn peace and purity, lovingkindness and patience, and mercy, in that these are the sweet things of God; these are the highest gifts; these the most glorious graces; the perfect things of heaven, here given to us in time.

Make us wise to know what we would soonest part with; whether, if the choice were given to us, we would rather be impure than poor; whether we would rather part with truth than wealth; whether we desire more the honours of this world, than the hidden manna, and the Name written in the book of life. Have mercy when the world creeps and crawls upon us, and its foolish greatness and gilded idleness seduce us.

Lord God! if we must carry the palm-branch, and cry Hosanna! let it be to him that "cometh in the name of the Lord." Make small to us the great things of the world. Make foolish to us the wisdom of the wise. Let Thy wise foolishness be ours. May we prefer goodness to greatness; pureness to pride; worthiness to wealth; the doing of one good thing to the hearing many great ones; rather to be of Thine unknown known ones, written

in Thy book of Life, than to have our names written in the book of earthly fame. Teach us the wisdom of the foolishness of God; how Christ crucified is redemption and sanctification; how by suffering and self-denial, and giving up the lower life, the higher life is reached. May these things, that sound so strange, become to us so dear and so familiar, that whatsoever other things we may know or not know, the heavenly tongue, the Divine speech, the words of the Comforter, may be ours.

Let all things be suggestive of the thoughts of God. Let us walk in a world filled with the Spirit of God; filled with joy and peace in believing.

Almighty God! grant, we beseech Thee, that Thy word may still be preached in the earth, until all nations shall have heard the glorious truth of the one living and true God; no more priests, no sacrifices, no blood-streaming altar, no mortification of the flesh alone, no matter called unclean, no sweet affection trampled upon, no lovely thing of mortal life crushed; the intellect no longer degraded; the reason no longer offered up; but Man, body, soul, and spirit, Thine; Thy child, Thy sheep;—Thy wandered child, Thy strayed sheep, it may be, but called by Thy

sweet love back to Thyself. Until at last the wide, wide world shall know the Father—God, and there shall be but one fold and one Shepherd; one God and Father of us all.

Towards that

"far-off divine event"

may we after our measure strive; and in the increase of knowledge, the strength of love, and the constant light of truth, may we see the old things pass away as baubles, toys, and playthings, and Man learning to live in the sweet lawlessness of love, because ever doing the eternal Will of God.

Hear us of Thy mercy, through Jesus Christ our Lord.—AMEN.

ALMIGHTY GOD, we are but weaklings, and there be many things in this world to confound us; its history a mystery, its meaning not all clear, its end a conjecture. And when we look within us, there is so much to confound us; the warring heart never at rest; the earthly life that brings us down, and the heavenly desire that lifts us up; great hopes now dim, great fears now strong; now we sin, now we do right; now we are longing

for Divineness, now sunk beneath our manliness; singing, weeping; needing mercy and asking none, or needing mercy and asking much; so strange and vast the changings, so great the shiftings of this life of ours, that at times we seem to be confounded. What can we do, but put our trust in Thee? Show us that these clouds and earth-mists are all within Thy hand, known to Thee, seen by Thee, guarded by Thee, guided by Thee into issues that are Thine.

We beseech Thee more and more to shut us in to lowly trust and confiding faith. May we trust more than we know, and believe more than we see. Let our belief have one eternal article that never changes: God is great, His name is Love, He lives for evermore.

When we look at ourselves and those around us, help us to say, "God desireth not the death of a sinner, but rather that he should turn from his wickedness and live."

Let us trust Thee, and grant that this perfect trust may bring us to perfect peace; and tossed as we are by the unrest of this world, nevertheless let there be times when Thy beloved shall have peace. Let visions of the better life steal over us, and dreams of a far-off paradise comfort our souls.

Grant that however dark at times may be our life, some melody of the eternal chime may come across us, and we may be lifted up to the great hope that one day all these tangled things shall be smoothed out, and the vexed things of earth made plain in the light of heaven.

Almighty God! if we could but have more steadfastness it were well for us. Give us some portion of Thine. And when all things in this world waver and rock, then let us remember that Thou changest not. When our little lives seem so vexed with change, then let us remember Thy fixedness and say: "It is well!"

When, Lord God, we think of those that we have loved and have not, and long for and can find them not, give us faith to believe that not out of Thy sight are they gone, though out of ours; that in some other place of Thy large Divine life they are, and that one day the door of death shall open, and we, passing through, shall behold them made beauteous with the sleep of death, made radiant with the Life of God.

In sorrow and trouble, let us not be obstinate and proud, but lowly and humble, always trusting Thee, that what is best for our souls Thou hast done; what is best for our spirits Thou wilt do.

May we leave all, O God, to Thee. Thou art great, we are nothing. Love us, lift us, strengthen us. Guide us even to the end, and afterward receive us to glory. We ask it in the name of Jesus Christ our Lord.—AMEN.

"I go to prepare a place for you. I will come again, and receive you unto myself; that where I am, there ye may be also."—JOHN xiv. 2, 3.

ALMIGHTY GOD, who in the time of our shadow and darkness canst be our only true and lasting light, look upon us Thy sad children with Thy constant mercy, and give unto us the spirit of understanding promised by Thy dear Son. When our eyes no longer behold what we have loved, and we listen for the footsteps of those who have gone out of our sight, and find them not, what can we do but turn to Thee? And when our hearts fail us, and we sigh for that which cannot be, and no traveller comes back from that far country, and there be none to comfort us, make us to trust in Thee. Then comfort our simple souls with the words of Thy Son: "I go to prepare a place for you. And if I go, I will come again, and receive you unto myself; that where I am, there ye may be also."

Lord God! Who hast filled us with much earthly love, if one we loved should say to us, "Where I go, there shall ye be also," all doubt would vanish, and hope would arise, and faith grow strong, and we should quietly wait. And is it so, Almighty God, that we shall ever be with Him, Thy Son? It is enough. Why, we ask not; how, we know not; when, we care not; these things are Thine. Where Thou leadest we will follow. Enough for us to hear Thy voice: "Where I am, there shall ye be also."

In times of sadness let this comfort us. When, like

"infants crying in the night,"

and looking for the light, the customary light, and finding it not, we wail to Thee in the darkness, then let the sweet words, "Where I am, there shall ye be also," comfort us. To be in Christ is to be in light. To be where He is, is to be in love. Safe are they who know that the Shepherd is near.

When the mind is too weary to work, and the soul is too sad to think, and we can do nothing but sit upon the ground and say nothing, still let the sweet words, "Where I am, there shall ye be also," comfort us. In Him is all fulness, with Him is all fulness. In Him is all love, with Him is all

love. Let these words never wear out. Let them be as fine gold that can never become dim.

The little child crieth in the dark for want of light, but when it feels the touch of the mother's hand, and hears her soft voice bidding it rest—though still it is dark, yet the sweet words are there; and though the lamp of light be gone, the child sleeps again. Lord God! what are we but little children crying in the dark? Let the touch of Thy hand be felt by us, and let the sweet tones of Thy voice be heard. We ask no more than this to hear once again the words: "Where I am, there shall ye be also."

Then shall we sleep again in peace; then shall we be quiet; then faith shall have her perfect work; then shall we trust Thee, and be still; then hope shall light its lamp; and we, being found diligent in Thy service, shall cry, "Establish Thou the work of our hands, O God; yea, the work of our hands establish Thou it."

Give us this comfort of Christ, through the Spirit of truth, in which grant us all to abide for evermore, through Jesus Christ our Lord.—AMEN.

"Say not thou, What is the cause that the former days were better than these? for thou dost not enquire wisely concerning this."—ECCLESIASTES vii. 10.

ALMIGHTY GOD, Who in many ways dost fulfil Thyself, deserting no generation, falling away from none who trust in Thee! Grant that at all times we may serve Thee as the present and ever-living God; that no greatness of ancient testimony, no awful record touching Thy deliverances in olden times, may be so great as to hide for a moment Thy nearness to us, and Thy loving presence in our souls. And if at any time we believe that Man was once nearer to Thee than now;—if, misled by a brightness long since faded, we come to think that the heavenly joys were easier gotten, and the consolations of the Spirit closer at hand in those days than they are now,—wake us up to understand our own dulness, and to know Thee as the living God.

If, with foolish fondness, we turn to ancient forms, and believe that they were of deeper worth than the souls that are inspired now; help us to turn to Thee, and remember that Thou art the ever-living God, Thy Spirit never resting, Thy voice never dumb.

If we believe that once the oracles of God were lively oracles, and that now they be but echoes of what once was the voice of God; help us to know Thee as the living God who speaketh to-day as ever; and to remember that all forms are Thine, all life is Thine, all words are Thine, and that to us, in this our day, Thou speakest as of old. For those who look for ancient signs and wonders we beseech Thee, that they may look for Thee as Thou comest, and hear Thee as Thou speakest; not in the trembling earthquake, nor in the fire, but in the still small voice.

Lord God! if we seek after earthquakes of spirit, and believe it possible to bring Thee nearer by what they can do; let us remember that if we draw near to Thee, Thou art here; that every day we may behold Thee; that not a breeze can blow without whispering of Thee; that the flowers cannot bloom without telling of Thee; that the little child cannot smile without preaching Thy sweet gospel; that human love, and friendship, and tenderness, and pity should never be passed by, except we look upon them all as heavenly messengers, telling us of God.

And may the smarts and woes of life, its bitterness and tears, its dreary discipline, all tell us

that this world is but a school-house, which, though irksome to the child, is nevertheless a preparation for a loftier Life.

So be to us the Living God, that we may no longer ask the men of old to teach us of God, but wisely ask how they lived and loved, and remember the words of the Lord:

"Greater things than these shall ye do, because I go unto my Father."

And not in the sacred song of so-called Divine Service may we sing to Thee only; but every day, in every work, in every play, in every thought; finding Thee the God of discipline, and the God of joy, ever-blessed, Who art ever looking upon the sin and sorrow of the world that Thou mayest relieve it.

So, turning to Thee in sin, in sorrow, and in righteousness, whether holy or sinful, may we find Thee ever ready, now to kiss us with Thy mercy, now to lay upon us Thy chastening hand; knowing that all Thy dealings with us are for our ultimate salvation. So may we walk in wise joyousness. And if the clouds appal us by their dreary lowering, even then, in the darkest days of our lives, let us trust in Thee.

In day and in night, in life and in death, may

we ever trust in the Lord of life, the Lover of the soul, our Father-God, our ceaseless Friend, our merciful Judge. Into Thy hands, O God! we commit our spirits. Of Thy mercy hear these our supplications. We ask it, in the name of Jesus Christ our Lord.—AMEN.

NOVEMBER 19, 1876.

"The counsel of the Lord standeth for ever, the thoughts of His heart to all generations."—PSALM xxxiii. 11.

ALMIGHTY GOD! we are children of change, whose days are short, whose purposes are many; yet our eternal joy is to remember that Thy counsel standeth for ever, the thoughts of Thy heart to all generations. For, Lord God! what matter that we pass away so quickly, if we are in Thee? What matter whether we live or die, if we are within Thy loving care it shall be well with us. And we beseech Thee that amid all chance and change of this our fleeting life, we may ever rest in God, and wait patiently for Thee, Whose counsel standeth for ever.

Lord! we look upon the nations that have been and are passed away, the ruins of ancient things, the dim fame of the things the world has counted

great, and we turn and remember that Thy counsel standeth for ever.

When we would lay hold upon life and strength, let us know that Thy counsel standeth for ever, for only in that which abideth can we abide. When we remember how much of the misery of life has come from our foolish neglect of Thy counsel; how we have known the true light, and turned against it; beheld Thy glory, and closed our eyes; known Thy love, and shut our hearts; heard Thy warning, and risked the sin; heard Thy promise, and not tried to earn its fulfilment;—have mercy upon us, and let our doubting hearts be comforted, in that Thy counsel standeth for ever.

And, Lord God! when, in days to come, all seems dark, and we know not what things to believe, give us faith in Thy love and Thy counsel that standeth for ever. And when the mystery of death and the uncertainty of to-morrow seems to crush us, let us remember that Thy counsel abideth for ever. So, with quiet, fixed heart, may we rest in God.

Have Thou mercy upon all poor fainting and failing souls, for, Lord God! it is ever with us a change. Now we are in a rapture of love, and

now we are in the chill coldness of disobedience; have Thou, therefore, mercy upon us, and, by-and-by, in Thine own good time, so order the things of our life that we may end in the calm, quiet peace of those whose hearts are stayed upon God.

O Lord God, when we count the little things of this life to be of much value, and the sorrows that torment us in this world to be very great, teach us to smile as we think how small these things be when we remember that Thy counsel abideth for ever. May our hearts learn to be quiet; and grant that out of the quiet heart may come the earnest soul, and a constant dutifulness in whatsoever circumstances of life we may be placed. Let our fixed hearts remain unchanged, our faith unshaken, our hope bright.

So trusting not in knowledge, nor in vision, but simply knowing that "Thou art there," grant that all these things may bring us to the peace of God, which passeth understanding, through Jesus Christ our Lord.—AMEN.

"My meditation of Him shall be sweet: I will be glad in the Lord."—PSALM civ. 34.

GRANT, Almighty God, that our meditations of Thee this day may be sweet; that pondering upon Thine unchangingness, we may the better bear the changefulness of our lives; thinking of Thy constancy, we may the better bear the fickleness of our feeling; meditating upon the largeness of Thy love, we may the better bear our own coldness. Whatsoever there is in us that is evil, forgive. Whatsoever there is in us that is good, may the circumstances of our life, the friends of our soul, the meditations of our heart foster and enlarge; so that, knowing that which is good in time, we may better hope for what is good in eternity, and rise, through the poor goodness of mortal man, to the understanding of the infinite goodness of the Lord our God.

Comfort us by Thy greatness; uphold us by Thy strength; bring us all, in the fulness of time, into the fulness of God, through Jesus Christ our Lord.—AMEN.

"We spend our years as a tale that is told."—PSALM XC. 9.

MAKE us wise, Almighty God, ever to set our lives in the light of Thy countenance. When we think of life's shortness, let us remember eternity's lastingness. When we mourn over Man's weakness, comfort us with God's strength. When we have lifted our piteous cry touching the short life of the flower, how quickly gone; then let us turn, as the ancients did, and say: "Thy years are from everlasting to everlasting."

When we see the falling, failing things of life, let us turn to the unshaken purpose, the unchanging will, the fixed things of God.

So, Lord God! when our sins are before us, and looking back upon the way we have travelled, we see here waters of bitterness, and there days of sin; here a wilderness made wild by our wilfulness, there barrenness spread by our sinfulness;—still may we turn to the merciful God: for though our sins are many, Thy mercy is great; though our sins are swift, Thine anger is slow; though our tears are many, Thou driest up all tears.

And when we look at death, and count with sad accurateness the empty places, and we long "for the sound of a voice that is still," and cry for "the

touch of a vanished hand;" then, Lord God, let us comfort ourselves, in that Thy truth and Thy mercy reach to children's children. In Thee are all souls; to Thee belong all spirits; with Thee are the dead —with Thee, because they are alive. What is in Thee must be of the Living. They are in Thee, and they live!

And when our days are joyful, let us see no contrast to them in Thee, who art altogether lovely. To Thee, even the grave means beauty, and evil things are in Thy sight means to ultimate good. Thy joy is unbroken; Thy gladness, Thy blessedness, unshaken. O Lord God, in sunny days may we see Thee to be our sunshine, and in dark days may we see Thee still to be our light. "He that keepeth Israel neither slumbereth nor sleepeth." In the morning when we awake, let our first thought be: "O Lord, in the morning will I direct my prayer unto Thee, and will look up."

O Lord God! let come what will, sunshine or shower, few days or many, the pinching of poverty, or the glorious fulness of plenty; whether the head be bowed or upright; whether we rise to highest glory, or sink in deepest sorrow; whether we keep our souls clean or defile them with sin; whatsoever we do, even at our worst estate, we are near unto

Thee. And at whatsoever time in our lives we turn to Thee, this we know: Thou wilt do what is best for the spirit that is within us; and wherever we go, we know it will be to our true destination. Into Thy hands, whether we are saintly or sinful, sad or glad, O God! we fall. Make our will Thine; then shall we say: "Not unto us, but unto Thy name be the glory."

Receive our thanks, our hearty thanks, for all Thy mercy to us during the year that is past. Have mercy upon our folly. Pardon our sins. Hear us when we thank Thee for all that Thou hast done for us; and, Lord God, help us to thank Thee for the stroke, for the tear, for loss and darkness. Help us to sing Thy song in the night. And hear Thou the thanks of those who specially desire to render them to Thee for mercies received.

Lord God! let Thy grace in times past of our lives be to us a pledge that the God of our fathers, Who hath been good to us in childhood now, when some of us are old and grey-headed, will not forsake us. Be to us as Thou hast ever been to all who have trusted Thee, faithful even to the end. Hear us of Thy mercy, we beseech Thee, through Jesus Christ our Lord.—AMEN.

"With the pure Thou wilt shew Thyself pure; and with the froward Thou wilt shew Thyself froward."—PSALM xviii. 26.

GRANT unto us, by Thy Spirit, Almighty God! that we, being stirred by true love to God and man, may win for ourselves the true light, whereby we may know that which is right, and that which is evil; and so, lifting ourselves constantly above ourselves, we may understand Thee through our love of that which is righteous and good.

Almighty God! make us wise to know how to know Thee; not by vain talk or ancient legend; not by buried thought or far-fetched dream; not by eager words or human science; but by the passionate desire for what is right, and lovely, and pure, and just, and noble. When this desire is active amongst men, lifting us ever higher and higher, then shall we know Thee more, and see Thee better.

We give Thee thanks, Almighty God! that as men have been raised into better living, the God they believe in has been by them raised into holier Being. For, Almighty God, how can Thy purity be well known to the impure? How can Thy loving-kindness be known to the unloving? To those who are vengeful, Thou must seem vengeful. To those who love evil, Thou must seem but a tyrant.

But to the mother, bending over her little babe; to the man, willing to die for country or for friend; to the heart ever moved with a desire for good, whose pleasure it is to do good, to lessen pain, to increase knowledge, to brighten the world that is, and to make us hopeful of the Life hereafter,—to these, how Thou becomest Father, Lover, Shepherd, Friend, Lord, God, All in all!

Of ourselves we cannot know Thee; without ourselves we cannot know Thee; by what we are we cannot know Thee, except Thou teach us all better what we might be. If there be no rain, how shall there be cloud? If nought cometh from the skies, there will nought ascend from the earth. All is from Thee. So guide us, so let Thy love lighten upon us, that we, learning to love Thee, may know that Thou art Love. And as the little child grows to understand the sweetness of love, by having love shown to it, from what is done to it in lovingkindness; and learns of a higher love from the mother whose sweet face bends over it with loving care; so bend over us, that we, knowing Thy love, may learn love. For in Thy light we see light.

Alpha and Omega! Beginning and End! begin in us Thy love, that we from Thy love may learn love, and giving Thee love, bring down love

again. Thus let the great wheel turn, the eternal circle go on; from God to man, and from man to God; that so, between us and Thee, there shall be no cloud, nor shadow, nor darkness, and the day may come, when in the perfect light of God, we may live, die, and live again.

Teach us that when we do what we know to be evil, we darken the face of God, by the clouds that go between us. Show us what we have lost by going astray; how we have wasted time that might have been spent in the beauty of righteousness, in weeping over fault and stain and sin. Show us what sights we have failed to see, because our poor eyes have been turned to lower things; what depth of beauty we have lost by going after false gods; what waste of light by seeking darkness. Now have mercy upon us. Make Thy Name glorious to us, and in us. Enlarge our hearts, and we shall run in the way of Thy commandments.

And we beseech Thee, Almighty God, deliver us from too much considering what others have found Thee to be. Rather may we find Thee to be large-hearted, bountiful, rejoicing in all, correcting all, loving all; that knowing Thee to be our Lover, we may be willing that Thou shouldst smite, strike,

and wound us, rather than that we should go astray. Give us tears, that there may be cleansing; smart, that there may be healing; the stroke, that the blueness of the wound may bring back health to the soul. And Lord God! even if it be fire with Thee, that purging fire that cleanseth the soul, and maketh it strong like mölten iron; if it must be so, then for us, the fire! If it may be so, let this cup pass from us; but let nothing pass from us that is needed to make our souls clean; that in the cleanness of our souls, we may see the brightness of Thy Spirit.

To this end make all things helpful; life, and pain, and sorrow, and misery; day and night; summer and winter; cold and heat; let all these things help us, for in helping us, they worship Thee. Let us join the great song of old:

"O ye fire and heat, O ye winter and summer, O ye dews and frosts, O ye frost and cold; praise ye the Lord!"

Let all things help us to render our thanksgiving unto Thee for Thy mercy.

Hear the prayers of those who ask Thy presence, whilst shut away from others. Teach them all that whether they are with the multitude or alone, God is there.

Hear us of Thy mercy. Make Thy face clear to us. Lead us in patience, correction, and mercy, through life and death, into the eternal peace. We ask it in the name of Jesus Christ our Lord.—AMEN.

"Rest in the Lord; wait patiently for Him."

ALMIGHTY GOD, we rejoice in Thy fixèd will, Thy stable purpose, Thine unshaken power, Thine enduring mercy. And we rejoice more and more in these things, for we suffer change. The body changes, and the soul within us undergoeth strange changes. And the world changes. The eternal hills are passing away, and the deep sea is filling up, and all things suffer change. And we ourselves are not as we were; the fancies of our youth, and the dreams of other days are gone. Those we love are not where they were; their places are empty, and the old familiar faces become fewer, and all is changed. The old order, in all things, passeth away, and the unaccustomed new cometh in its place.

O Lord, we would rest in Thee; in Thee alone is the true Rest, for Thou knowest all things from the beginning, and Thy ways are without restless-

ness or change. Teach us what it is to rest in God. And when the order of the world seems to us cruel; when the constant destruction of beauty and of life seems to us hard; when we look grudgingly at the falling leaf; when we see the fair little child bowed down in death, and behold man in his prime go to his long home; when we mark the slaughter, the tyranny, the cruelty of man, and when we watch Nature, and see how seemingly regardless she is of all this;—what can we do but turn to Thee, Whose law underlieth all, and Who art the End of all?

All this is Thine; Thou seest it all, Thou hast seen it ever. And because we know Thee, and trust Thy love, though blind as to vision, yet far-seeing as to faith, help us to say, "It is well," and rest in God. When the heart sigheth after the things that are gone, and is weary for the longing that it hath that we might touch once more the old familiar hands, help us to say, "They are in God; it is well." And when heavy clouds are over us, and the veil is thick, and all is dark to us beyond the grave, and we can neither see nor hope, help us to be quiet in God. Thou madest life; Thou madest death. It is well.

When we hear of the mighty things that man dis-

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covers, and then stand by the open grave, pondering upon the awful and hidden ways by which Thou hast led man; when we think of the dim ages that are passed, and of the long procession of years that are to come; when we know that this poor little world, upon which we live, must sometime go its way, and be no more, or pass into some condemned region of coldness and of death; and we feel ourselves nothing: yet even then, may we rest in the Lord.

O God, to Thee there is no great, and no small, to Thee the ages are but as sands on the sea-shore, and the nations but as a drop in a bucket. We rest in God. And when all our care and toil seem to give to us little; when our vexed lives seem to be to us so little worth; we rest in God. They are Thine, Thou madest them; Thou knowest we are but dust; it is in Thy care.

So, Lord God! help us to be very quiet, and very patient; to rest lowly in Thee, to leave high things, and seek not for unfathomable things; but learn Thy lovingkindness, and show our true believing of it, by doing like unto it. May we hear Christ say, "Seek ye first the kingdom of God, and His righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you."

Do Thou give us true uprightness and loving-kindness, that we may care little for the other things, and caring little for them, care little whether they be added or no. Should they not come, may the higher life within us make us careless for the lack of them, that we, living in love and in truth, and, thanks to Thy wondrous works, in beauty, may be content to let this vain world go its way, disturbing ourselves not about it; but, as little children, leaving all to God. So, looking with a quiet smile upon the vanities of life, abjuring its pomps, declining its ambitions, may ours be the life of the true man. Upright, fearless, just, quiet, patient, pure, lovers of Thy works, and of all Thy wondrous ways, may ours be the life of the true beauty of God. Then when we come to die, let it be without fear. Death is Thine, Thou madest it, Thou knowest it, we submit to it, we rest in God.

Thus, till the few more sands of life shall have run out, may we know the calm of God; and may the peace that passeth understanding keep our hearts and minds, through Jesus Christ our Lord.—AMEN.

JOB xxxviii.

ALMIGHTY GOD! when Thou sendest forth Thy word and the great winds blow; when the storm comes and the thunder rolls; when the rain falls and the earth is flooded, and man's thoughts are sad, for the seed is not sown and the fruit is swept away, and the mountains send down torrents and the valley is overflowed, and all looks dead and life seems low;—Thou hast Thy great mysteries to work and Thy loving deeds to do. We thank Thee for what all our knowledge teaches us; that when man cries out, it is but the cry of impatience that sees not into deep things, the cry of those who feel more than they understand. Lord God! teach us all, that about these outward things Thou art truly wise in Thy doings. Down to the deep springs of the earth these rains shall sink; and when, in days to come, the hot sun shall burn and the cloud come not, and the blue sky shall weary us because it is so blue and blue so long; when, Lord God! the parching day shall come; then, in Thy deep store-houses, there shall be the hidden waters: men will go to the deeps, and know why they were flooded aforetime, that they may be filled now.

And, Lord God! when in the soul's story, in the strange wondrous world that each of us bears about within him, that land of loves and hates, of trust and truth, or of meanness and falseness; when, within us, dark clouds come again after the rain, and life is weary, and the heavy weight of unintelligible things presses us down, and the life within us sinks, when trust is gone and hope is feeble, and the storm is loud and the night is dark,—let it be that through Thy love there may go on in us what goes on in the outer life; and in these dark days, when all things seem to press upon us, down into the deep wells of trust and love, into the springs of work, and courage, and hope, the Spirit of God may come; that by-and-by, in these gathered treasures, we may find blessing.

Help us in the dark day of the valley of the shadow of death; in the days of loss, when friends are false and lovers few; in the days when the blood creeps but slowly and the soul knows no light. Grant that all outward pressure may but deepen our inward strength, and the failure of outward light but increase our inward life, whose pleasures go beyond death, whose riches transcend time.

Lord God! if any of us have been impatient and have cried out against Thy dealings with us, make us to be wise and to know that all things go well in God; that where God is, good is, and may we be quiet. Lord God! believing that Thou hearest us, help us to pray: "Thy will be done in earth, as it is done in heaven." Let Thy will be done in our hearts as it is in Thy kingdom; for when Thy will shall be done in our hearts, Thy kingdom will have come, for we shall have entered the kingdom of God. Hear us in Thy loving mercy, through Jesus Christ our Lord. —AMEN.

"I sought the Lord, and He heard me, and delivered me from all my fears. They looked unto Him, and were lightened: and their faces were not ashamed."—PSALM xxxiv. 4, 5.

ALMIGHTY GOD, we give Thee thanks that one who knew Thee well and sought Thee diligently, whose soul panted for Thee as the hart panteth for the water-brooks, declared that "They who looked unto Thee were lightened." So, laden with the things we would not do, and yet do; and the remembrance of things that we ought to have done, and have left undone; thinking of our sins,

and of how many times we have turned from the light, that we might walk in the darkness fitter for our own evil deeds; thinking of the cares and troubles of this our life, that are too much for some of us; how can we be otherwise than burdened? Hard the work for some of us, scant the means, short the strength, small the courage! We be burdened. The burden of the body at times doth pain us, and the earthly frame doth weigh down the immortal soul, and quench the spirit, until at last our heart is heavy; and when the heart is heavy, all things are burdensome.

Lord God! Thou knowest how many things have been heavy upon us, that would not have been heavy if the heart had been light; help us to carry before Thee that heavy burden of evil-doing, and to look into Thy face and see Thy ceaseless forgiveness, and be lightened. May we carry to Thee all the faults of our lives, and lay them down before Thy judgment and mercy, confident that we shall be lightened. Trusting in Thy guidance, casting our care upon Thee, doing the little best we can, dreading rather those things that issue from us than those things that surround us, may we learn Thy solemn law, and, comparing our poor deeds thereunto, bravely bare our back for the punish-

ment, knowing that if we look unto Thee, we shall be lightened.

And when age brings weakness and weariness, still let our heart be light, that through hope and faith we may look unto Thee, and be lightened. When the shadow of the valley of death is upon us; when those we love pass out of sight; when the eye hath not what it delighted in, and the ear craves for the music that has stopped for ever; when the mother's tender care looks in vain for its object, and the "nursing-father" has not whereon to spend his passionate love; when we feel the cold shadow upon ourselves; when all things are vague and dim to us, and pleasure and pain taste much alike, help us to look unto Thee, and be lightened; help us all bravely to bear.

In the time of our darkness, let the eternal light shine upon us, and in the hour of death, comfort us by the faithful promises of God. Help us all to look unto Thee, and then grant us to be delivered from all our fears. For, "They looked unto Thee, *and were lightened.*" This we do ask, in the name of Jesus Christ our Lord.—AMEN.

ALMIGHTY GOD, Who art the Father of all things, and Who dost desire that all men should come unto Thee, of Thy lovingkindness and tender mercy make our hearts so to be filled with the fulness of understanding, that we, with all our hearts, may strive for all things that are just and right and true, as being those by which Thou canst best be known. And make us wise to remember, that whatsoever is good in man, is of God, and that all things exist in Thee and by Thee, and that Thou speakest unto us, even through ourselves. May we, then, not be giving ear to distant voices and far-off prophets, but give audience to the "still small voice," to the solemn words of justice, to the decisions of the wise, to the searchings of holy men; and, so helped on to true knowledge, we may rightly understand Thee and how to serve Thee, and understand the love of God and the love of man; and, keeping these two great commandments, we may fulfil all the law and the prophets.

Hear us of Thy mercy, through Jesus Christ our Lord.—AMEN.



"O God! most hidden and most manifest!"
ST. AUGUSTINE.

O LORD GOD! most hidden and most manifest, whom no eye hath beholden, and whom no eye shall see, yet seen by the lowly-hearted, the just, the faithful, and the true, teach us never to despair because we cannot know Thee in Thy wondrous greatness; but rather let us rejoice that that which is common to all of us is of Thee—the knowledge of right and wrong, the principles of truth, and the practice of justice.

And, Lord God! while at times we roam over Thy mighty works with the fond desire that they should reveal to us Thy secret in them, yet may we be wise enough to come home and give ear to the quiet teachings of conscience that we may truly find Thee there. So, while we hope not to understand what Thou art, as a Spirit, or what Thy wondrous nature, yet we do understand what Thou feelest towards us. And we beseech Thee so to rule and guide our lives, that we may do unto others as we would they should do unto us; that we may love mercy, walk humbly, live peacefully, and come at last into the Rest of the Eternal God.

Grant unto us, amid the many changes of our times, and the many searches after truth, the failings of old things, and the incomings of new ones, that we may abide by the old faith, which beneath all forms and changes of time hath still held to the great truth that Thou lovest the creature Thou hast made, that Thou longest for his life and willest not his death, that Thou doest alway that which is just and right;—the faith which was in patriarch and prophet;—the faith which underlay the faith of all Thy children, of all times and creeds. Grant unto us the wisdom to see, and seeing, to rejoice, that though so much has passed away that men believed in olden days, yet there is no decline of faith in the beauty of loving-kindness, in the gloriousness of purity, in the beauty of righteousness, the splendour of justice, the strength of truth. And may we be too wise to join those who mourn, or those who shout in anger, because the things of yesterday pass from us. We go on towards Thee, O God: we are of Thy nature, because we are of Thine image and Spirit.

We beseech Thee to give us Thy quiet peace here, that, amid all chance and change, we may have ever this comfort—God knows, God wills,

God loves. May no storm have power to fright our steadfast hearts, and no change have power to go down to the deep things of our quietness; so that whatsoever shall abide or pass away, we may know that the word of God has never changed. the word of righteousness, justice, and truth. So may Thy changelessness be our stay, and Thy steadfastness our upholding. Hear us in Thy mercy, through Jesus Christ our Lord.—AMEN.

ALMIGHTY GOD, one who wrote of old said that Thou tookest pleasure in all Thy works, And we are lost in wonder at their amazing beauty, their wondrous order, their awful structure, their marvellous growth, their swift decay, their constant spirit.

Lord God! we wonder not that Thou takest pleasure in Thy works. Marvellous they are, and that our souls know right well. Wondrous are the shining heavens, wondrous the lights the eye of man can behold! When we study the seeming fixed stars and behold these flying worlds that make night marvellous, we wonder not that Thou takest pleasure in Thy works.

Lord God! look upon us in mercy, while we

speak in mournfulness of how hard it is for us to take pleasure in our own works—so well begun, so evilly finished. Yet, Lord God, Thou hast given us to feel and to behold things so lovely and of such good report, that we have pleasure therein. We behold the little babe, with its wondrous beauty, its inquiring eyes, through which the soul looks out upon a world all so strange, and we feel pity, and love, and tender awe. Lord God! Thou hast given us to feel charity and mercy; Thou hast lighted within us that awful light of conscience, dim whilst passion prevails, silent whilst sin is a-doing, bright shining in the dark, clear speaking in the hours of bitter repentance. For this stirring voice, and this spiritual light, we give Thee thanks: they pledge us to Thee, and Thee to us: they are Thine.

We are akin to all things beneath us; we shape the life of the things around us; yet have we a strange power of mounting which they know not; for the trees of the forest are as they were, and the stars of heaven know no changing. But Man, Thy child, changes and passes on, and, standing in this wide world, asks strange questions of what Thou hast made; and so we know him to be Thine. O Lord our God! wake in us a deep sense of the highest life

of Man. Let us not lose ourselves in the life which we share with all things, but strive to be citizens of Thy holy city. All powers of intellect may we gather, all powers of knowledge may we search for, all powers of genius may we be moved by; but above all things make plain to us the beauty of what is right, the beauty of what is tender and true. May we love what is lovely, and hate the sinfulness of sin; detest all crookedness, and love all straightforwardness of purpose. Forgive those of us whose tempers are crooked, whose selfishness spoils the life of the house. Pity those whose tongues are tipped with scandal, whose hearts are soured by jealousy and envy, which kill love, and make crooked the spirit. Into our hearts and homes bring the spirit of charity and joy in God, and the simple faith, faith in the all-wisdom, all-mercy, all-lovingness of God.

So, like quiet children, may we do our day's work, and take such pleasure as the setting sun shall give to us, until the time when the vineyard-gate shall close for us, and the morning bell shall call us no more to this world's toil; then may we lie down to sleep the sweet sleep of the labourer, trusting in Thee to grant us the life everlasting.

Of Thy great mercy make clear to all of us Thy

truthfulness, that we may love Thee; and cure us of that sad weakness of giving way when the storm comes and the day is dark. Lord! Thou makest shadow because Thou hast caused light. Lighten our darkness, we beseech Thee; let no calamity too much overshadow us; for beyond all these fitful shadows there is the joy of heaven. In this we will be confident, the cloud will pass, sorrow will cease, and all shall be well.

So love us that we may love Thee, so guide us that we may come to Thee, so forgive and comfort us that we may live in Thee, and so live in us that we may never die. Of Thy mercy hear us, through Jesus Christ our Lord.—AMEN.

The Living God.

ALMIGHTY GOD, we confess that we need a guidance better than our own, a hand stronger than ours, a counsel deeper than our wisdom, and an aim higher than earth. Because we know so little, and our wisdom is not deep, and our hand doth shake too oft with sin and passion, we cry unto Thee, "Lead us by Thy right hand, O God! guide us by Thy counsel, and afterwards receive us unto glory." We beseech Thee,

make us wise to know the counsel of God, where it is, what it is, and how it is to be gotten; and let us seek it in no false places, nor expect to hear it in foolish ways. Lord God! when we seek Thy counsel, let it be of the LIVING GOD. Our fathers sought Thee, and in some things they found Thee, but in some things Thou wast hidden. Grant unto us, not their vision, but their desire for it; not their counsel, but the wisdom which led them to seek it; not their words, but their spirit. We pray Thee more for the Spirit than for the Word of God; we pray Thee more for the light that lighteth inwardly than for the light that is seen. Whatsoever others may do, we need the counsel of the LIVING GOD; for God looketh through all glorious things of life, His movements are through all things, by His breath is the heaving of the sea, His touch gives life, His touch withdrawn brings death.

O God! we would seek Thee in all fair things, in the eyes of the little babe, in the sweetness of the flower, in the cheerful voice of the bird, and in the solemn wail of the storm. Thou art the LIVING GOD! We seek Thee, O God! in the heart of man; in his mercy, and his pitifulness, his lovingkindness, and patience. We seek Thee in

the ways of life; we will not hear what men of old have found the way of life to be, but rather what *we* find it to be as living with the Living God. And grant us that whilst we greatly reverence the words of the wise, nevertheless we may not surrender at any time the light that lighteth us inwardly. Lord God! give us evermore this light, guide us by Thy counsel, and afterwards receive us unto glory.—AMEN.

WE give Thee thanks, Almighty God, that more clearly to us than to our fathers it is revealed that Thy mercy endureth for ever. Far behind the later days in which they dreamed the world began, Thou hast given to us to see the times in which its teeming life went forth, and for what long, long ages Thy mercy has been over all Thy works. To us Thou hast given clearer vision, of Thy works, and by thought upon them, to know the long ages throughout which Thou hast put forth Thy power, Thy wondrous wisdom, Thy clear design.

We give Thee thanks that many things which were not visible to the men of old, are clear to us; that the dreams which as they thought explained the deep things of the world, are passed away; and

though there are many things we cannot yet understand, we rejoice to know of the far-stretching ages, into which we may look and cry, "Thy mercy endureth for ever." May this gladden us in the hour of our littleness, and teach us patience, and how independent of all such things are the pious life, the godly heart, and the charitable spirit.

Lord God, our day is so short, and our desire to do much so strong, that we would fain, before we go to our fathers, gather the harvest, before the seed we have sown has had time to grow. The more we desire good and hate evil, the more we ourselves pass out of darkness, the more we wish, by some quick change, the world should be made good, and the Kingdom of God should come. We vex ourselves with the unrighteousness of the world, and, like children, wonder that the seeds come not up more quickly.

Lord, let the solemn ages that have rolled by, teach us how patient Thou art. When we think of the vast forests of distant time, and see how slowly and surely the coal for us was made; and how Thy Spirit has brooded over the world for ages, may we remember Thy sure patience, and remember that if Thy purpose worketh slowly, Thy victories are sure. When we look into the deep

things of righteousness, and again mourn that the Kingdom of God comes so slowly, teach us how patient was the Master, how few disciples He made before He departed, and may we learn His patience.

Lord God, we would not be patient with anything evil in ourselves, but with the slow growth of good in us. That which is evil, help us to cast out at once; but help us to be content if every day we give up what is hurtful, and practise what is just, and try beyond what we have before attempted, to be more like Thee, to make the world wiser, sweeter, and more true than we found it.

Let us try, at least, to cheer the lonely, to dry some tear, and if, whilst we are doing this, death should come, let us not mourn that before our work was finished the end came, but rejoice, as did the men of old, that they could hand down Thy work from child to child, and teach Thy will to those who are to come.

When we long to lay hold upon the hidden things and make them our own, when we would fain light up the darkness, so that there should be no more mystery, teach us to be patient; teach us that in better times, and under happier conditions, the Spirit of God shall be more fully manifested. Teach us in all things to trust Thy mercy which

endureth for ever. In day and in night, in life and in death, Thy mercy endureth for ever.

Especially when the shadows shall fall, and the signs which cannot be mistaken tell us that the longest night is drawing near, and our little day is coming to its close; when the heart sinks low, and the natural clinging to life still would bid us stay; let Thy mercy be about us, that we, without fear, may shut our eyes in death, trusting to open them in eternal Life.

Take out of us all sin, that the sting of death may be done away, and we may lie down at last to sleep our longest, sweetest sleep; out of which, by Thy mercy, which endureth for ever, we may wake to eternal Life.

Hear us of Thy mercy; we ask all in the name of Jesus Christ our Lord.—AMEN.

"To know the love of Christ, which passeth knowledge that ye might be filled with all the fulness of God."—EPHESIANS iii. 19.

WE give Thee thanks, Almighty God! for the words spoken by that strong, stout soul, who tells us that we may be filled with the fulness of God. Almighty! we shrink at first from words

like these, "filled with the fulness of God." When we look at this wide world, and think of all that is therein; when we think of the great worlds so far away, at which we can only gaze; when we think of Nature, and of the skill that Thou hast given us to find out and to know her secrets; when we remember the records thereof that are beneath our feet, under the earth, in the deep places in the sea; when we write the history of man's strange, sad story; when we remember that all the life that has ever been in this world, is part of the fulness of God; then, Lord God! we shrink and say, "Shall we indeed be filled with the fulness of God?"

Lord God! we look abroad, and lo! the little flower that blows is filled with the sunlight; and the few tones of the bird's song are full of sweetness; and yet we shrink and say, "Our vessel is but earthly, it is but small; shall it hold the fulness of God?" Yea, Lord God Almighty! our vessel may be small, but if it is of Thy fulness to be filled, it is large enough for Thee. So be it. Let the fulness of God pass by us, in us, through us, that we may shine with Thy fulness; that when we love, it may be with the fulness of Thy love; that so, we being filled with the fulness of God, may, in this life,

live in the Life of God, and in the world to come know Thy fulness for evermore.

Almighty! Thou hast so ordered and fashioned us, that at times we are filled with a fulness that is not Thine. Some strange fountain flows, we know not how it comes, nor whence its bitter waters sprang; but here they are, and even those things that might not have had bitterness, have been made bitter; and of the waters of Marah we are called to drink, where there might have been wine; and the short chapter of man's life that was given us to some better end, is all marred and blotted, and even that Gate which should admit us into the large wide fulness of God, seems, oh! so black and dark! Almighty! why? Give us the fulness of God! The fulness of life that conquers death! that we may dare to look forward to that day when this mere form of life shall be changed, and we pass on to a larger life, a nobler body, better conditions, wider influences, an untroubled soul.

Almighty God! help us to look forward and hear the words of that great, stout soul, who looked beyond the races of men and their trials, beyond the conquest of death and the victory over the grave, and beheld the multitude "named of Christ in heaven and in earth," the glorious family

of mankind : who looked beyond sin, and suffering, and death, and hell, and beheld God, all in all. So, when the troubles and sins, the disquiets and unrests of this weary world seem to rise too high for us, on some top of Pisgah may we stand, from which we may look down on all these things, and behold, far away, and yet near, dim in distance, yet certain in God, the great day when God shall be all in all.

When we tremble and fear, because of the greatness of our distress, or the keenness of our grief, because of the loss of those we love, or, worse still, because of the loss of love itself; when these things rise up all chill, and there seems nothing beyond them, and these snow-topped mountains shut us into despair ; then let us think that all these things are of Thy purposes, determined by Thee, made and governed by Thy lovingkindness. And as we, gazing at the western clouds, judge of how the day shall close by watching their passing, so may we know how all this sinful strife shall end, when we read that while we were yet dead in trespasses and sins, Thou didst love us, and quicken us together with Christ.

O Eternal Lover! Who lovest the living and the dead, Most Merciful Father! Who lookest upon the

quick and the dead, and Who quickenest the dead into Thine own Life, save us from all distrust; and while the storm is loud, and the battle rolls, and the vine blossoms not, and the fig-tree fails, may we have the sweet calm peace of God, looking forward to the blessed day when God shall be all in all.

Then we can at this time go back to our work with heaven-got glory; back to our labour, however lowly, as workmen of God, desiring ever to give full proof of this our calling, of our unity with this family "named in heaven and in earth, of Christ;" that we too may have part in that wondrous song of Moses and the Lamb; of the sword of war, and the peace of God; the fiery days of man's trial, and the sweet days of man's redemption; of man's fall, and of his uprising; of blindness and of vision; of sickness and of healing; of death, and of life.

Give us all this hope in Thee; may we cleanse ourselves from those low things that hide Thee from us, and rise at last to the clear vision of God.

This we do ask, in the name of Jesus Christ our Lord.—AMEN.

"O give thanks unto the Lord; for He is good: for His mercy endureth for ever."—PSALM cxxxvi. 1.

WE, too, bless Thee, Almighty God! that Thy mercy endureth for ever.

For ever! then we came into this world in mercy.

For ever! then the strange story of man is told in mercy.

For ever! then all things are of Thy mercy, by Thy mercy, and in Thy mercy. And we, looking back upon our errors and faults, and lapses from righteousness, call to mind that "the mercy of the Lord endureth for ever." From day to day may we go forward, upheld by this; until, looking death in the face, we may say calmly, even then, "The mercy of the Lord endureth for ever." Lord God! show us Thy mercy in storm, plague, pestilence, fire, and darkness. Teach us these hard, high lessons of faith. It is easy to see Thy mercy in the things that are fair, in the flowers and fruits brightened by the glowing sun, in the sea sleeping in calm beauty; it is easy in these things to see the picture of Thy mercy. But, Lord God! when storms are about, when the fire rageth, when the earth heaveth, and the earthquake causes men's

hearts to tremble; when sickness comes, and death is at hand, then, Lord! teach us to see Thy mercy in sudden death, in frightful doom, in human woe in man's crime, in disease, decay, corruption.

Lord! make us wise to see Thy mercy. O wondrous wealth of wisdom, for us to see Thy mercy! and yet, if wise and lowly-hearted we might.

Then should we sing Thy song in the light; and in the dark night sing a more touching strain. For this loftiest of all possible loving that comes from the lowliest of all possible living, we beseech Thee that, as little children, we may touch Thy hand, and be comforted, and what we know not, quietly wait for. We are but weak and lowly, and at times all life is dreary to us; but "Thy mercy endureth for ever." Show us Thy mercy in the light of the sun and moon and stars, in the earth and its fruitfulness, in the destruction of tyrants and haughty kings, and in the uplifting of the oppressed. Teach us in the night to meditate upon Thy ways, until we too shall sing Thy song, from birth to death, "The mercy of the Lord endureth for ever."

Pity us, when in Thy ways we cannot see mercy Oh, long-suffering God! wait for us awhile. The

lesson is not easy, for we are full of self. Call us! cause us to come, that at last, in sunshine and in gloom, in the daytime and in the darkness of night, in the fulness of life and in the dulness of death, in plenty and in loss, in pleasure and in pain, in the full cluster and in the grapeless vine, in all things and through all things, we may see the mercy of God, and join the great grand thanksgiving, "Bless the Lord, O my soul, for His mercy endureth for ever."

Of Thine enduring mercy hear these our supplications, offered in the name of Jesus Christ our Lord.—AMEN.

"My soul cleaveth unto the dust: quicken Thou me according to Thy word."—PSALM cxix. 25.

LORD of all! Our Father who art in Heaven! Almighty God! Our Eternal Lover! Wondrous cause of all things! Of Thy mercy comfort us with the remembrance that Thou knowest our frame, Thou rememberest that we are but dust. Forgive us when the dust from which we come, and to which we go, causes our soul to cleave thereunto; for we, O God! must cry, as did that pious soul of old, "My soul cleaveth unto the

dust." Not alway with love of it do we cling, but oft-times with loathing. Not alway with desire for it, but oft-times with a passion for freedom. But the mean things do so much master us, and base things do so bend us unto like baseness, that our soul cleaveth unto the dust. Oft-times we cannot fly, for we cannot get free, and the limed wings cleave close to earth. Fain would we breathe the heavenly air, and behold the vision of God, but our sins and foolishness make us cleave unto the dust. It is hard to sing Thy praise, when the conscience knows Thy law hath been broken. It is hard to look Thee in the face, when we are hiding from Thy law.

We cleave unto the dust, and to the dust of death we often cleave; for the grave hath more attractions for us than the heavenly mansions, and the thing lost is greater to us than the thing that is promised. The blank places of earth fill the eyes more than the peopled places in heaven; and so we cleave unto the dust, and the shadow of death puts out the light of God, and the fasting sorrows of time blot out the feasting bliss of Eternity.

We cleave unto the dust; but, O God! quicken us, for Thou canst quicken us. Open our eyes,

that we may behold the land of promise. Quicken us. Forgive the sullen ears that we have turned to Thy sweet sounds. Make all life to us open, for if faith paint the scene, the great things of the spirit shall be set forth by the things which do appear.

Lord! we cleave unto the dust in all things. We long for "atonement," "sanctification," "regeneration." We cling to the dust of the wooden cross, the spilled blood, the law in its literalness, and we know not the Spirit. Work out for us in spirit all that has been done in deed. Let all justification and redemption be known to us as great things in the spirit, that through the outward body of pious things we may behold the Spirit of God. Show Thyself to us in the Spirit. Help us to worship Thee in spirit and in truth. Forgive those of us whose knowledge is so scant from indolence of mind. Forgive those whose passion is so cold for want of the divine glow. Forgive those who see not their own emptiness, and who never take a view from Pisgah's top of the Promised Land. Pardon those who do these things wilfully; pity those who do them through ignorance. Lift up the bent head. Make straight the bowed back. O Lord, our souls cleave unto the dust: quicken us,

according to Thy word. Forgive us all the foolish things that we have said and thought and done. Forgive us all the evil things that we have wilfully done. Pity us when we go wrong through ignorance; but pity us most when we go wilfully astray.

Lift up the load Thy broken law doth lay upon us. Rid us of the burden that hinders the race. Love us most when we least love Thee. Look on us as erring children, requiring more the Father's care; as strayed sheep, requiring the shepherd most because of the bramble and the thorn, the torn fleece, the bleeding feet, the unsatisfied soul. And, Lord God! by Thy dear love in Jesus Christ, bring every one of us, through such journeying as Thy large love may deem best for us, into the land where man never falls, nor goes back; where learned lessons are never forgotten, where gathered wealth is never lost, where treasured love is never smitten, where the sunshine is perpetual, and where the light of Life, the Light of God, shines for evermore.

Hear us of Thy mercy, through Jesus Christ our Lord.—AMEN.

"I will walk at liberty: for I seek Thy precepts."—PSALM cxix. 45.

ALMIGHTY GOD! in Thy mercy look upon every one of us according to our needs, that we may all be able to go in the way of Thy commandments. We bless Thee for the large liberty whereby we walk, no man daring to make us afraid. Teach us that deepest, strangest obedience, the liberty of love that looks up and adores; that so, being bound, we may be free, and being under authority, we may be above all power, and being under Christ, we may be safe in God.

Thus do Thou increase the liberty of our lives, that, having the inward law written upon our hearts, we may look forward to, and even for a moment touch, that blest estate in which all struggle shall cease, and our passions shall but lend fire to the purposes of the heart; where all shall sing the same sweet song, and the words and music shall be all as one; where the spirit shall need to war no more against the flesh, and the body shall need no more to be trampled or kept down; where there shall be no rule and no law, for all shall live in the light of God;

where love shall be the law of life, and life shall be Divine.

And though this fair prospect seems yet so distant, and the Holy Land so far away, still let us strive for it, and let the strife be unto the end. And, Lord God! if the days of this our mortal life be not long enough for this high endeavour, for the victory of the spirit, for the full mastery of the higher over the lower, let the long days of the eternal years be ours, that in them we may still go on in endless progress towards perfection. Lift us to the knowledge of the freedom of God: and may the things passing around us have no power to shake our steadfast souls, striving ever towards that blessed end when peace shall be in the earth, and knowledge shall cover it, for all shall know the Lord. And when our patience is scant because the years of God are long, and we look at the dial of life and see how fast the shadow moves, or watch its sands and see how low they run, or count the friends of our youth and see how they be thinning; then let us hear Thy servant say, "A thousand years in Thy sight are but as yesterday when it is past." Confiding in Thy love, may we lay down our little life, and commend our souls in sure trust unto Thy strength, knowing that from

Thee all things come, and to Thee all things go, and that one day Thou wilt cause all evil to pass out of being and wilt Thyself be all and in all.

Hear us of Thy mercy, through Christ our Lord. —AMEN.

"Thou wilt shew me the path of life: in Thy presence is fulness of joy; at Thy right hand there are pleasures for evermore."—PSALM xvi. 11.

O LORD our Governor! Thou dost give us, even here, and we bless Thee for it, Joy; sweet hours in which we may be glad and praise Thee. But it is not fulness of joy that here we know. We have had no joy yet that contented us; none so rich that we could not wish it richer. The cup has never been quite filled for us. When it was sweetest, there was ever some little tinge of bitterness. We drink, and into the cup our tears fall, and they are always sad. Thou dost give us the joy, we offer the cup. And what is our cup? Mortality, flesh, earthliness. Mortality stained with sin; flesh spotted with lust; earthliness that seeks the dust. In such a cup how can it be all sweetness? In Thy presence, in Thy pure presence, is fulness of joy. Write this sweet

sentence on our hearts, "Fulness of Joy;" because in Thy presence there is pureness too: at Thy right hand there are pleasures for Evermore.

Almighty! how that great word mocks this little life of ours! What have we that lasts for evermore? Those whom we love most dearly Thou dost call to Thyself all too soon. Our purest thoughts, our holiest longings, pass too quickly from us. Some sad sleep of the soul smothers, before they be grown up, its good desires, its wholesome purposes. With us nothing is for Evermore!

At Thy right hand stand the holy ones whom we have lost; the dear and pure ones who have washed their robes and made them white. They are at Thy right hand, and there are pleasures for evermore. Speak these sweet words into our hearts: "Pleasures for Evermore!" When we wake in the night, may they, like angels' songs, lull us back into needful rest. When the long hours go so drearily and painfully by, may we remember them. Thus waking, watching, working, weeping, may they be ever in our thoughts, giving us strength for the toils of life, and patience for its pains.

And these things we do ask, in the name of Jesus Christ.—AMEN.

ALMIGHTY GOD! Thou Who canst stir and still the soul, move now upon these dead hearts of ours, by Thy great power.

We would listen to Thee always, and yet often Thou art silent to us. We would never let go Thy hand, yet Thou dost sometimes seem far from us. We would walk on the waves to Thee, yet all too soon we sink. We would stay ever in the sweet sunshine of Thy love, yet clouds hide Thee from us. Father! we know that these clouds which so heavily gather round us, do but rise from our own weak, foolish hearts. The strongest of us must needs confess that our faith is weak, our hope but dim.

Yet, O God! when the gloom is thickest, and we grope most painfully, not knowing whither we go, let us not lose our hold on this most blessed truth,—Thou wilt never destroy one poor child of Thine, who, longing to do Thy Will, and to walk lowlily with Thee, does yet miss here a line and there a line of Thy teaching. We venture all too feebly, we serve Thee all too faultily; yet teach Thy weakest child that while striving towards the right, he is striving towards Thyself, the loftiest thing that can be done.

Father, Almighty! Ever Loving One! in life's toils be Thou with us, strengthening our hands for work. In our grief be near to comfort us. In those dark days when Thou takest from us our loved ones; when we cry out for them in the quiet watches of the night, and they come not; when our hold on immortality is very feeble; when the heavenly Life seems more like a dim Perchance, than a Divine Reality;—in those dark hours, Good Lord, deliver us!

In those sad hours of the soul, when we think of duties undone that never now can be done; of the dead to whom we have been unkind; of those whom we have wronged, whom we have tempted, whom we have forsaken, or who have forsaken us,—in those hours of desolation, Lord! lift Thou up the light of Thy countenance upon us!

When the day of trouble comes, and come again it must, to each of us,—in the hour of death, when we have looked on our last sunrise, when friends are round us, and yet we are alone,—then do Thou, great Spirit! comfort us.

When faith is weak, and trust in others is too harshly shaken, and trust in ourselves is almost gone,—then let us know Thy Name, which is Love.

Help us ever to look across the darkness of this

mortal life, and the gloom of the grave, to the bright broad sunshine of Thy love, beyond.

Help us to live in such reverent obedience to Thee, that Thy truth may fall into our hearts as seed into good ground. Give to us the sweet fruits of the Spirit, that, after flourishing awhile in this ungenial soil, Thou mayest transplant them into a warmer clime, there to bloom in never-ending beauty.

And these things we do ask, in the name of Thy Son Jesus Christ.—AMEN.

WE praise Thee, we magnify Thee, Almighty God, for the great gifts Thou hast bestowed upon man. We bless Thee for our relationship with all things below us, that all life is renewed in us, that all forms of life come to their glory in us; but we chiefly give Thee thanks that the image of the Divine, the spiritual gifts of love and pity, are ours.

We bless Thee for the great gifts Thou hast bestowed upon man. For wit and wisdom, for mirth and joy, for laughter and tears, for the keen sense of beauty, for the raptures of enjoyment, for all those things that give us an ear for the music that Thou hast made, for an eye clear and open

to see the wondrous works of the Spirit, and for the desire to understand as far as may be these things, for the words of the wise and their treasured knowledge, for the books of the ancients and their gathered lore, for all the transmitted things of ancient days, for all the wisdom of olden time, for all the gifts and graces which Thou hast bestowed upon man—for all these, O Lord, we bless Thee.

We do greatly covet the true wisdom, the wisdom that is behind all life, the wisdom that teaches patience; the wisdom that teaches us quietly to bear the things that come upon us, lest we be impatient, and should be hurried in our trouble, and it should pass without blessing. Let the word of Thy wise servant sink into our hearts—"In the time of Thy trouble, hurry not." When Thy good angels come, O Lord, grant us a patient spirit, that we may entertain them, learn a lesson from them, win their blessing, and let them go. If life bring to us trouble, let us remember that trouble hath a message for us; if we are weary, let us remember that weariness hath blessed things to teach us, too; and, lest we be impatient, let us remember that some have sent the best praise to God who have been most patient in weary days.

Grant us wisdom, the wisdom that endures,

and endures patiently, as knowing how strength cometh out of endurance, and how victory only followeth after battle. Give us wisdom, tolerant, large-hearted, charitable wisdom, the wisdom that is better than prudence, the wisdom that is deeper than those things; give us the wisdom that lives with charity, that lives by charity, that is informed by charity; may the largeness of our love make the completeness of our wisdom, that so, living in love, we may be truly wise.

Almighty God, forgive us our dulness and indolence, our ignorance and stupidity; forgive those for whom Thou hast made such sights, and who, having eyes, behold them not; forgive those who, having such wondrous books before them, take no delight in them; forgive those whose ignorance forbids them to seek after knowledge; forgive those whose indolence leads them into superstition. Grant us to be active in the ways of God, to prove all things, to ask continued questions of Thine oracles, knowing that they be never dumb to those that humbly question them.

Lord God! Whatsoever outward circumstances may bring to us, grant unto us the large, free, strong, brave, bold life of the intellect, and the lowly, loving life of the heart. When we grieve, let

it be rather for the evil that is in us than for the evil that is done to us; when we mourn, let it be rather for lost righteousness than for lost happiness; when we are angry, let it be with oppression and injustice.

In all things give us the deep wisdom which is Thine; then shall our life be strong in God; then, though we cannot count the sands of the sea nor call the stars by their names, we may rest in Thy strength and humbly trust that our little lives may run their course, until at last Thou shalt bring us to the blessed land of the eternal peace and consummate wisdom, and to the vision of the Spirit of God.

Hear us of Thy mercy, through Jesus Christ our Lord.—AMEN.

"The Lord preserveth the simple: I was brought low, and He helped me. Return unto thy rest, O my soul; for the Lord hath dealt bountifully with thee."—PSALM cxvi. 6, 7.

ALMIGHTY GOD! we give Thee thanks that one who knew Thee so well, and loved Thee so deeply, and sought after Thee so passionately; who cried unto Thee so strongly, who sang unto Thee so sweetly, who left Thee so sadly, who came

back to Thee so penitently and was received by Thee so mercifully, could leave to us this his word, "The Lord preserveth the simple." For we would be simple in the Divine sense, lowly, childlike, dwelling in Thee. The knowledge of Thy works is too great for us, we cannot reach unto it; we can think of little before we are astonished, we can muse but little before we are lost in wonder; if we look backward, the darkness gathers round us; if we look forward, the mists are close and thick. Thy doings are too wonderful for us!

What can we do but be simple souls, content with few precepts and two short commandments, which are the sum of the whole matter? What can we do but be content with a few duties that we can clearly see? Oh that we as faithfully did them as we can clearly behold them! What can we do but leave all things to Thee—for all is Thine, and we cannot understand whence we come, or whither we go, or how? When the shadow of death falls upon us, what is our knowledge? Our eyes have long been strained into the dark, if haply we might see the trail of those who have gone before. How little light we have! How much faith we *should* have! We are but as children groping in the dark.

Help us to trust in Thee; and when we know

not Thy ways to put all our ignorance quietly by, and trust in Thee, and declare to all men that Thou knowest when we know not; Thou art strong when we are weak; Thou art wise when we are foolish; Thou knowest all things, but we are of small understanding. And if any of us chafe against these things, the little knowledge and the little light; if we would fain understand more and see further, and we rebel against those things that are hidden from us, make us wise. Thou art the helper of the simple. We would be wisely simple, childlike, trustingly, faithfully simple. Help Thou us.

We ask not for the help that cometh through knowledge, nor even the help that cometh through light. Shouldst Thou increase our knowledge, we would bless Thee; shouldst Thou increase our light, we would praise Thee; but should knowledge be denied us and light not come, still let us cry unto Thee, "Thy right hand shall guide me." "At Thy right hand are pleasures for evermore." Our hand is helpless, Thine is strong; join Thy hand to ours and all is well; touch us and we are healed and uplifted; speak to us and there is peace; speak to the storms of life and they sink; speak to death and it is doomed; speak to the grave and it is

glorified; speak to the decaying dust and resurrection comes.

Lord God! let our prayer be to Thee. Helper of the Helpless! help us! We need Thy help, we are but simple souls at best. Let Thy right hand lead and guide us until such time as we, too, shall find that at Thy right hand there are pleasures for evermore.

Hear us of Thy mercy, through Jesus Christ our Lord.—AMEN.

"He that hath clean hands, and a pure heart; who hath not lifted up his soul unto vanity, nor sworn deceitfully. He shall receive the blessing from the Lord, and righteousness from the God of his salvation."—PSALM xxiv. 4, 5.

ALMIGHTY GOD! whatsoever may be our sins or faults or failings, at least save us from this—"lifting up our soul unto vanity." Unto vanity the flesh doth betray us, unto vanity our passions lead us, to Vanity-fair these things do lead; yet though we go on in them and even end therein, nevertheless let not our soul be lifted up thereunto.

"Vanity of vanities, all is vanity." We have declared it! We give Thee thanks that even there the soul has not been satisfied; we have drunk the

wine of passion, and have missed oft-times the water of life; after the wine we have thirsted again, but after Thy living water we have thirsted no more.

When for awhile the soul has been asleep, or when the soul hath been turned out that the body might have its supreme will, whensoever we have drunk of these things, Lord God! thirst hath come again, and the vanity of this life hath never satisfied us. We bless Thee for every thirst that comes after evil-drinking, for every pang that follows evil-doing. For all the aches of heart and head that come through our evil-goings, we give Thee thanks, and we beseech Thee that they may make us wise, that we lift not up our souls unto vanity. Soul to soul, Lord, let it be; spirit to Spirit, ours to Thine. Let the soul that hath mourned so oft that it had not power to keep the rebellious passions down, assert itself now.

Help us, not to lift up our soul unto vanity; it is evil enough to have lifted up the eyes, it is evil enough to have lifted up the hands, it is sad enough to have lifted up the heart; but grant that we lift not up the soul to vanity! To God and to good, to grace and truth, to sanctity and sweetness, to light and knowledge, we thank Thee that oft to these

sweet and beauteous things, we have lifted up the soul; but to vanity, never! Save us, good Lord, from this.

And if any of us have given too much care to little things, and too little to great things, forgive us. The dust of earth doth cling so close, the world is so strong and some sins are so sweet, the wine is so pleasant-coloured, the fires of passion are so very bright, and the poison-flowers do look so like honey-flowers, Have mercy!

But come what will, or let what will have been, hear this our prayer: Save us from lifting up our souls unto vanity! Not to the shadow, but to that which causes it; not to things seen, but to the unseen Spirit; not to things of mark, not to these outward signs, but to Thyself we would lift up our soul.

And, Lord, for this we lift up our thanks, we bless Thee chiefly for the holy thoughts that wise souls have given to us, for all pious hours and glorious aspirations. We would bless Thee most for these inward gifts, and may our hearts, our hands, and our souls, all rise in thankfulness to Thee. We thank Thee for the yellow sheaves of harvest for the colouring fruits of autumn, for the stores laid by for winter days, for the beauteous colours

of the dying year, and for the glorious promise of bread.

For these things we bless Thee, but we thank Thee also for the bread of life, for the wine of God, for the broken bread and the poured-out wine of Christ Jesus, for the books of the ancients, for the learning of the wise, for the songs of the poets, for the strains of the musicians, for the wise words of men who have studied Thy works, for all these things we bless Thee. For the playfulness of the little child, for its bright-eyed beauty, its sunny head and joyous life, we bless Thee. For the ripple on the sea, and for the fair smile that is there, for the blue on the mountains and the golden clouds of the west, we bless Thee.

Grant to us all gifts, for we passionately covet them ; give us much, for we hunger much, we thirst much. All things would be ours if we did but ask of Thee! Give us Thyself, Thy Son, Thy Holy Spirit, the blessed company of the martyrs, the wise souls of all times, the lowly-hearted and the loving ; make all these things ours, then shall the soul be filled, and never lift itself up to vanity. And when the days of the things of this world shall pass away as the mist of the morning, we shall see the eternal things of the eternal God, and the soul shall

lift itself up, and, through Thy mercy, find itself at home.

Of Thy mercy hear our supplications, through Jesus Christ our Lord.—AMEN.

"In Thy presence is fulness of joy; at Thy right hand there are pleasures for evermore."—PSALM xvi. 11.

ALMIGHTY GOD! so teach our hearts, that the sweet strong words of that great soul of old may be our words, and that into them may come some of the ancient strength and all the ancient sweetness, that we too may know what is meant by "Thy right hand." Whom Thou lovest, Thou gatherest to Thyself; in Thy presence is fulness of joy. For all our earthly joys, give us this.

But, Lord! should we come to Thy fulness, how should we praise Thee? Our joys have been many, but our joys have been short; after the song comes the tear; after the smile, earth becomes grey; after the sunshine, life becomes gloomy, and men are tedious, and all things smell of the mouldiness of earth. We have never known yet the fulness of joy,—seldom the fulness of earthly joy,—seldom the fulness of human joy.

Lord God! Thou hast so ordered that when we

have known it in its fulness, hunger hath come again, and thirst come back; the bread of pleasure we have eaten, the wine of delight we have drunk, but we have hungered and thirsted again. We have run, and travelled, and sought far, and wandered, and have come back; now, Lord God! we beseech Thee, teach us the words of Thy Son—

"I have water to give, of which, if a man shall drink, he shall never thirst again."

Oh for the bread that leaves no hunger! Oh for the water that kills all thirst! Oh for the joy that needs no repentance! Oh for the pleasure that brings no sting! Oh for the songs that have no ending! Oh for the hours that have no sinning! Lord God! only they, are Thine. "At Thy right hand is fulness of joy." Teach every one of us, saint or sinner, old or young, wise or simple, that we can have no hope but in Thy love. Of Thy justice we are sure, but our trust is in Thy love; weeping, sad-hearted and sinful, we cannot fly to Thy greatness, except the greatness of Thy love; as little children gone astray, as sinful children, we come back, that in the everlasting arms of Thy love we may be safe again.

Bring us by-and-by to the great Rest of Death, that there we may hear no more the vain babble of

this world, and feel no more the grinding crush of earthly care, and the stinging things of earthly life. Take us to Thyself in Thine own good time; and when Thou takest us, so love us after, that we may be of those who shall be at Thy right hand, and find what now we seek, and taste what now we long for—"In Thy presence is fulness of joy." Of Thy mercy hear us, through Jesus Christ our Lord.—AMEN.

"My meditation of Him shall be sweet: I will be glad in the Lord."—PSALM civ. 34.

ALMIGHTY GOD! Who knowest the hearts of all men, search and try whether or no the meditation of our hearts touching Thee shall be sweet; whether we can bear to meditate upon Thy pureness, upon Thy justice; whether our past lives, our present faults, our future intentions, can, before Thee, give us meditation which shall be sweet. And if, O Lord God! our meditation touching ourselves be bitter, into that bitter fountain press the healing branch of Thy forgiveness, that even when face to face with our shortcomings and sins, our meditation may be sweet.

Teach us of Thy mercy and long-suffering,

Thy patience and forgiveness, that, though weeping and penitent, yet quietly rejoicing, we may abide in Thy large love. Let our meditation of Thee be sweet, though the barrenness of chance and change come into our paths. When we look back upon the things that are not what they were, upon old times that are past, upon old familiar faces that are gone, and we long for the "touch of a vanished hand," and sigh for a strength now departed for ever; when old things seem sweet things, and things near seem bitter; then on Thy changelessness may we meditate, and may our meditation of Thee be sweet.

When we think of those now gone to rest, those that have loved us and that we have loved; when we think of the friends and lovers who have passed away, and we cry—"They have all gone into a world of light, and I alone sit lingering here;" then may we remember

"God is not the God of the dead, but of the living."

And believing that they all live in Thee, may our meditation of Thee be sweet.

And when we look forward to the times to come, and fear the heat and the toil, the weary way and the narrow path, the hill to be climbed, death to be faced, the judgment to be borne, then, remembering

that Thou art to morrow as to-day, and to-day as yesterday, and the same for ever, may our meditation of Thee be sweet. And when we think of the life to come, and we scarce dare hope, and scarce can trust, and but half believe, may we remember that what Thou givest Thou givest for ever, and Thy Spirit won on earth is Thy Life given in heaven; then may our meditation of Thee be sweet.

Forgive us when these meditations are not sweet, forgive us, for we are of the earth, earthy. We have drunk of the bitter waters thereof, and at times we have been bitter too; but grant us the water of life, and the bread of life, and the strength of life, that until our dying day and in that last hour, our meditations of Thee may be sweet.

Forgive us all our failings; forgive us all our sins; heal us of all our sickness, and bring us all at last, of Thy mercy and not of our merit, safe into the eternal peace, through Jesus Christ our Lord.—AMEN.

In Time of National Distress.

ALMIGHTY GOD! Who art that which we desire to behold, and the Light by which we must see; shine on us, that so, with eyes truly purged from the sins and vanities of the world, we may look up to Thee, knowing Thee as Thou art, and giving praise to Thy great Name.

O Lord, again we come unto Thee. In Thee we find help; in Thee our souls find peace. Grant we beseech Thee, that all the vain pomps of the world may, even through their vanities, lift us up to the contemplation of the great glories of the spiritual life. Give us that wisdom, that even the babble of fools shall be able to lead us, like a ladder, to God. Let, O Lord, the vanities of this world, and its idol-worship, but lead us the better to the true God. Let the Dagons of this world but make us turn with more reverence to the true ark of the Lord. Let the shouts of the people, ever ready to welcome guilty success, to worship the golden throne which wickedness has bought, lift some, at least, of us nearer to that Throne whose steps were never stained with blood, which was never mounted for unholy purposes; the Throne

of the King of kings, of the Lord of the lords of this world.

O Lord our God! stay our souls on Thee. When men forgive iniquity for the sake of policy, welcome fraud because it is a success, turn from this crime to that, and from one passion to another, be Thou our refuge, fixed, immovable, and eternal! King of the kings of this poor earth! when wilt Thou come again, O Christ our King, and take up once more the government of this misgoverned world? Hasten the day when men shall be ruled in righteousness, because they shall be ruled by God. The times are sad, O Lord; the days are evil; we will take our refuge in Thee.

In the olden days, when Thy Jewish people were growing feeble with coming decay; when the wise eyes of Jerusalem looked forward to the departure of the light of their glory, they found refuge in Thee. Let us, O Lord, who see little light, and have small hope, stay our souls on Thee. O God, our God! be our refuge in all time of trouble; our help in all evil days.

Of Thy great mercy bless us while we worship. Give grace to them that teach, so that, although sinners like the rest, they may know what is true, speak what is holy, and love that which

is just. And be Thou pleased to give intenseness to human purpose, Divine light to human will, that to the hearts of the taught may be carried the same knowledge and the same love. Bless those that hear, that so we may hope to get, out of the very sins of the world, some glory to God, and out of the empty words heavenly wisdom. As out of the dark things of the earth we get life and light, so out of the dark things of the spirit may we find light, and love, and peace. If babes and sucklings can glorify Thy name, let the foolishness of preaching not be in vain. Bless, O Lord, the teachers and the taught. Give mutual forgiveness and mutual reverence.

Bless all Thy Churches this day. Wherever men seek after Thee, whether in synagogue or church, or even in heathen temple, wherever men, troubled or sad, strive to know God, be Thou known! Fill the heart of every worshipper with a deep sense that God is found, and God is known.

Look on all in trouble and sadness, and in Thine own good time, O Lord! grant them relief. Look on the sick and the dying: let sickness to them be glorified, and death a blessed change. Bless, O Lord God Almighty! all exiles in our land; all those that have left the dear spot of their birth,

whose only sin was that they loved liberty, hated unrighteousness, loved justice, and denounced the wrong-doer. And in these days, when the world is forgetting them, do Thou, O Lord our God, plead their cause; help them in their distress, and teach them that, though iniquity may triumph for a time, truth alone hath eternal Life.

Bless those that enter the house of prayer once more, who thought they could never come again. Bless all of us according to our necessities. Thou, O God, knowest all our secret troubles; the troubles of the house, the troubles of the heart, the troubles of the conscience, the troubles of the body. Whatsoever any soul suffers Thou dost know. But, knowing that for every wound Christ has a balm, for every sadness a holy joy, we pray Thee, O Lord! to send us that balm, and to give us Thy glory. Teach us so, that even our foolishness may bring down to us Thy wisdom; and, while we strive to conquer ourselves, make us to know that even our infirmities but lead us the more to glorify that abundant grace, whose hour of victory is in the time of man's direst necessity.

There be storms in the world, and troubles are coming upon us, O Lord our God! signs of coming wrath, so that the stoutest hearts will quake.

Hasten the sheathing of the sword by sending us justice and truth.

Make our souls steadfast in Thee; fix the waverers that begin to forget Thee. Lend to our deeds virtue; to our spirits humbleness; and to our thoughts loftiness. What is lowly let it be great; what is human make Thou Divine. Exalt us so far as we belong to God. Fill the world with a holier spirit; send amongst us nobler men; in Thy good time remove the men that know not God, and love not the nation.

O Lord, not for us, but for Thee. Not for us the defence nor the victory. We can die to-day if it please Thee; not for ourselves, but for Thy great Name. And if Thou shouldest send us prosperity, then may we say, "Not unto us, not unto us, but unto Thee be the glory."

These prayers, we beseech Thee, hear from us, and answer, in the name of Jesus Christ.—AMEN.

O LORD GOD ALMIGHTY! help every one of us to remember into Whose presence we would now come; by what ear these poor few words are to be heard; unto what Throne these petitions are to be presented. Lord God!

Thou hast fire which can consume our impure thoughts, our unholy things; which can make of our poor sacrifice a sweet incense, and cause to arise a heavenly savour in the which Thou wilt delight. O Lord God, hear our poor prayers, and when Thou hearest, forgive their weakness, accept their intention, strengthen their feeling, make their expression strong. Thou canst take all the various things of our many hearts, and make them one. Accept, then, our one prayer.

Let the little child lift up its little heart in simplicity to Thee, knowing little, questioning little, but receiving in sweet faith the words it has been taught. Let the young join in this prayer, knowing they can only have true beauty so far as they have true goodness, and true goodness so far only as they have true godliness. Let those on whose shoulders is the burden of life, whose toil is much and whose leisure is little, join in this prayer; that during the heat and burden of the day, they may rest in Thee, as in the shadow of a great rock in a weary land, a refreshment to them when the world proves vain.

Look on them that are much in the world's ways. The child in its simple faith is upheld by Thee, and Thy comfort is ever with

the trustful old; but for us, doing the world's work, tempted by what others do; tempted to sell truth for opinion; choosing to take the poor standard of this world, instead of that of Christ;—none need Thy care so much as we. Look on us! hardworked, toiling much, and gaining perhaps but little; tempted to think that all is vanity and vexation of spirit, and covering ourselves with dread lest after all they be fools that sacrifice outward things for inward.

If we have become blind to honour, and the beauty of holiness, and the power of truth; if we have taken up our abode in this life, forgetting that it is a pilgrimage to a better,—open out for us a bright light, that amidst our crooked ways we may see once more God, and the soul, and the Life that is to come; the depths of the mystery in which the world rests, the awful future before us. Lord! love us much that bear the heat and burden of the day; watch us with Thy great care.

Look also that the aged join in this prayer. May it be their delight to look back on the way Thou hast led them. Give them Thy tender forbearance, pour on them Thy pity, give them the consolations of Thy Holy Spirit,

and the bright hope of the World-to-come. And as that world comes nearer, as strength begins to fail, as the things of the earth begin to fade, and the heavenly things look brighter, may they say, with the saint of old, "It is better to depart, and be with Christ."

So let us all lift one great prayer to Thee, and let the good desires of our one heart be heard, and blessed.

O Lord God! Thou alone canst read all our hearts; what can one teach so many? Strangers as we are, we know not the joys in one another's hearts, the bitterness of each other's sorrow. How shall one man teach so many, and pray with so many? But it is Thine to carry Thy word into many hearts, to bring forth blessing, and make to spring from all these spirits one great song of thanksgiving. So let one this day speak to the hearts of all, that they may serve God, love righteousness, hate the devil, and flee from the lusts and vanities of the world, that war against the soul.

Almighty God! make us all to be men in earnest; that we may know the way of the Lord our God, and walk in it.

Accept the thanks of those that have felt Thy

great goodness. And though there be some here, the delight of whose heart, and the light of whose eyes has been taken from them, make them remember the blessed time that draweth near. When the Master had tasted the bitterness of death, make us to remember the bright morning light that came after; the cry amid the tears, "Christ is risen!" and the victory is gained over death.

Fit us all for that day; fill us with immortal hopes. Make that death to show us that immortality is near; and though its image is unwelcome, an intruder, a sorrow, yet let us remember that death, only, can lead by the hand that most blessed gift, the Immortal Life; and if we will not have Thy sad messenger, how shall we receive Thy blessed angel that follows? May we be well content to see Thy sad angel, because he is ever followed to the gate of Thy Rest, by the messenger that speaks of the Life Everlasting, and takes by the hand them that believe in Christ.

Teach us to ask ourselves, what we shall be, when Death comes. If fashion and pomp, if guilty pleasures and wealth, and work, begin to tyrannize over the soul, let us be wise to see what Death can do. It can touch pomp, and make it dust; put its

hand upon wealth, and make it dross; breathe upon guilt, and make it corruption; touch work, and make it vain. Let us see what Death can do; lowering kings, touching men whose word was good against the world but yesterday, and making them vain, idle, Dust!

Let us see what Death cannot do. Let us see it lift up its great dread finger, and the power, the grandeur, and the beauty of this world pass away as a dream; but let it try to touch the Lord Christ! the immortal soul! Let us, then, with joy and thanks, see the finger of Death fall harmless; unable to wipe away a single promise of the Lord. Let our desire be, to be surrounded by Thy goodness, by the brightness of Thy glory, that death cannot dim; to have part in Thy beauty, and portion in Thy holiness, that death cannot efface. So fill us, Lord, with Thy deathless beauty and the glory of Thy truth.

Of ourselves we are nothing; through Christ we are much. Through Thee the sinful become holy, immortal through Christ. Comfort us with these great truths; we ask it in Christ's name.—AMEN.

"*Benedicite Omnia Opera.*"

"O all ye works of the Lord, bless ye the Lord: praise Him, and magnify Him for ever."—CANT. 35.

GRANT unto us, Almighty God! to take up that joyous strain which Thy holy children, tried by trouble, in the depths of distress, put to the proof by fire, sang unto Thee; when, forgetful of their own small troubles, they called upon all nature round to sing the song of God, the song of joy and gladness in Thy works.

O Lord God! whose ways are most wonderful, receive our thanksgiving for the renewed beauty Thou bringest into the earth. For Thou hast so fashioned us, that when the west wind blows, and the summer comes, the river of God is at its fullest; and into our senses, and, if we are wise, into our heart and spirit, comes the joy of God; and we, beholding this outward beauty, are called to meditation touching the very ways and works of the Lord. We give Thee thanks, Almighty God; we marvel, we adore.

How strange is the incoming of this life! We look abroad over the world that seemed a while ago so dead and chill and cold, but is now so

gladsome and bright; and then we look into the grave and gaze upon the face of death, and think of those that are gone, and say: Lord, if Thou shouldst breathe upon them, why should not they too become glorious with life?

Bless us when we are shut out in darkness for a while. Teach us that all things are Thine. Thine the storm, and Thine the calm; Thine the morn, Thine the eve; all are Thine; beyond Thee is nothing; away from Thee is naught. In Thee are all things, even our sins, our sorrows, and our sufferings; Thou watchest them all, knowest them all, seest their working, and plannest their destruction and their doom. Ever trusting in Thee, may we escape from our sad selves, and leave the burden of the mystery, and the heavy and the weary weight of all this unintelligible world, in Thy great hand.

O God, lift us up for this time, if it be but for an hour, above the things that have too much sway over us; and cause us to have communion with Thy works. May we question the meanest and simplest flower that grows, as to what was the Thought of its Maker, when it went forth from the hand of God.

O Lord, how rich are Thy treasures! how great is

Thy joy! We give Thee thanks for the rebuke that the sweet face of nature puts upon human pomp and vanity. We have read unto weariness of what the world counts pomp, of its titles and trumpets, its din and dust, its noise and state; and bidding these things adieu, as but the bubbles of passing time, we behold the everlasting hills, the great deep sea, the sweet flower by the wayside, the splendour of the heavens, the nightly stars, the consummate beauty of the dawn, the loveliness of the sunset, and we thank Thee that Thou hast given these things to all. Not to the great, not to the wise, not to the mighty only, are these Thy gifts given; but to Thy little ones, to Thy weak ones, and to those that are despised. O God, how good Thou art! for Thy tender mercies are over all Thy works.

And now, Lord God! if Thou makest a feast, give us grace to be Thy guests in thanksgiving and in joy. Let none of us turn sullenly from Thy splendour. Let none of us turn sadly from Thy joy. Let none of us beweak enough to suffer even the shadow of death to shut out Thy joy.

If Thy Son, when under the shadow of the cross, with strange fore-vision cried, "It is finished!" looking beyond, to the day when God should be all

in all, may we let sin sleep, and confession be quiet, and penitence wait for a while, in order that the "joy of the Lord which is our strength" may fill us, heart and soul, until our tongue breaks out into rapture, and the words of the poets are borrowed to set forth something of our divine joy and thanksgiving, and we join in the great song of nature, and are carried on to hear the sound of many voices, as of a great multitude, praising Thee for Thy great goodness to the children of men.

Hear us of Thy mercy. Love us much, even to the end. And when we turn, as we shall by-and-by, perhaps, weary with joy, and exhausted, and sin comes back, and shame with it, and sadness begins again, and the eyelids are bowed down; then let us remember that,

"Like as a father pitieth his children, so the Lord pitieth them that fear Him."

Lord God, we shall want Thy pity ere the night cometh. We shall want Thy pity when sickness is upon us; we shall want Thy pity when the angel of death passes by; we shall want Thy pity when our failing strength tells us that our little day is done; we shall need Thee always. Now we bless Thee, our Joy. Now we cry to Thee, comfort us on every side. Pardon our sins; uphold our feeble

strength; fill us with great thoughts, and give us the skill, courage, and patience, to make those thoughts become good acts, lest they pass away as visions of the night; lest they end in themselves, as blossoms that are followed by no fruit, as words that none can bless. Hear us of Thy mercy, in the name of Jesus Christ our Lord.—AMEN.

O LORD GOD ALMIGHTY! we do bless Thee for the word spoken of old by him who declared that we are the offspring of God. Help us clearly to see, and deeply to feel, what it is to be the offspring of God. When disgust at our constant sinning,—when distrust through our constant falling,—when weariness through weakness,—when faithlessness through darkness,—casts us down, and we cry, "What is man, that Thou art mindful of him?"—when our sickness, faintness, foolishness, and sin do make us sad,—then, O Lord, most Merciful! comfort us with the thought that we are Thy offspring—children of God.

O Lord our God! when those whom Thou hast given to us are sickly, wayward, erring, and sinful, we do not cast them off! Still they are ours;

still for them we labour, care, and toil. So, Lord may we feel that Thou wilt love us, and care for us, because we are frail and weak, foolish and sinful.

We would always be Thy children; not always Thy prodigal or disobedient children. Bring us back from all our wanderings; heal all our sicknesses; restore Thy likeness in us, and let us dwell with Thee for evermore.

Almighty God! Thou knowest our frame, Thou rememberest that we are but dust; and so remembering, have mercy upon us. We know our frame, we remember that we are but dust. Strengthen us, uphold us, keep us from falling.

We would serve Thee, but we are too weak; we have tried and failed; forgive and help us. Give us Thy strength, and we shall do better; renew us by Thy Spirit, and we shall do well. Lay Thy hand in ours; and then, though the night be dark, the way unknown, the tempest loud, and courage low, we will walk in childlike confidence, our hearts being stayed on Thee.

Let us hear the voice of the Good Shepherd; let us know that voice and follow Him to the true fold. In our dying hour, when flesh and strength fail, be Thou our help; let Thy rod and Thy staff

comfort us, and bring us safe to our sure abiding, in the Land of Perfect Rest.—AMEN.

A Prayer for the Nation.

O LORD our God! Who didst so show Thyself to the men of old; Who didst so make Thyself manifest in things outward and in things inward, that they broke forth into those blessed strains of holy thanksgiving, which still serve all devout souls the world through;—there be times when we think that Thou hast walked nearer to them than to us.

By the side of their glowing songs of praise, ours be cold; beside the strong rejoicing words of the olden days, ours be poor and feeble. There be times, O Lord, when we think the world has fallen farther from Thee, like some wandering planet from the sun, growing colder, darker, feebler, smaller. We look into our hearts, and find the world falls away from Thy truth. We read the story of this our land, in past times; we know there were giants in those days, with words great, and deeds greater; our fathers were mighty, their works mightier still.

But in these sad times we hear in high places

unlovely voices; we see men who know not the great principles of right, shuffling hither and thither with every poor wind of expediency and prudence. Into Thy temple the Mammon-worshippers come again, and we fear that there they will abide.

Rebuke our doubts, overcome our fears; show us that we of this age are as near to Thee as any. And when we seek Thee, as they did of old, make us to find Thee nigh at hand.

We bless Thee, O Lord our God, that Thou art unchangeable. The world, we know, can have no greater glory. The sun doth rise as fair as ever it did over the land of Judah of old; it goes down behind the hills of glory as then it did. We joy that now the heavens declare Thy glory, and the firmament showeth Thy handiwork. The ancients knew no lovelier land than ours. The sky was not more blue, nor the fruit more fair. And as Thou art with us still in all Thy works, be as much in our hearts as Thou wast in the olden time.

In spite of all curses, the earth is still blessed. O Lord God! bless us, and make us to continue the ancient glory; make the land to blossom and bring forth good fruit. Show to us that to do right because it is prudent or common, expedient

or approved, because it is loved by many and praised by some,—is a fruit not rooted deeply into the tree of life, a fruit that will perish and vanish. Let us be grafted into the true vine, that there may flow through us the true life, not of this world, but of the deep eternal Life that was in Thee before the world was; that light, life, and power that moves through nature, that ran through the holy men of old. We would be one with Thee; one in mind, one in loving goodness, one in hating a lie. We cannot become great, but we may become good, like Thee. Help us, O Lord God! that in us there may flow the same Life, Light, and Truth as moved in Christ, as was seen in the holy apostles, and made manifest in reverent and humble souls that Thou hast called Thy children and taken to Thyself.

What would hinder this, remove; forgive any of us that would prevent the incoming of the Holy Spirit. Pardon us if our talk is of the little things of this world, the things that pass away. Forgive those that think little, read little, talk much and unwisely of the things of this world. Let our speech be of the truth, the wisdom, the justice of God; the awful story of Man's history; Thine awful judgments, Thy terrible plagues; justice

done to the lofty sinner; exaltation to the lowly righteous.

If we speak of the common work of life, let it be done for God; if of our sorrows, let us bless Thee; if of our joys, let it be the overflowing of Thy gracious cup.

Let us look on our sufferings as angels, come to make the world not too lovely, that our thoughts may the better feel the glory of the Rest that remaineth for the people of God. Make our life so that its duties and joys, its cares and sorrows, may work for Thy good pleasure.

Our faith is in Thee, the Lord God of Light, Who art the God of the Spirit; our hope is altogether in Thee. Let us live in Christ's faith, die in the good hope of Life Eternal, and after Thou shalt judge the world in righteousness, may we begin that blessed Life Immortal, into which all that are faithful, love Thy name, and walk in Thy commandments, will surely come.

Lead us, while we worship Thee in spirit and in truth, so that we may find we have glorified Thy name.

O Lord God, bless Thy Church, the world through. Whenever men seek after Thee, let them find Thee. Whenever the sigh of sorrow, or the

song of thanksgiving from a glad heart comes, do Thou receive it.

Bless, O God, our own dear land. In the days of old, when nations thundered against us, and the ark of our liberty was in peril, Thou raisedst up great men. Make our people wise and holy; from passion and prejudice, folly and frivolity, do Thou deliver us. If it be Thy pleasure, send us peace, so that we may be as one great family. But our prayer above all, is: Give us justice, righteousness, and truth.

Make us all soldiers fit for that eternal battle,—the fight of the truth against lies, the fight of God against Satan.

Teach us so that in that fight we may acquit ourselves like men, nor lay down the sword till the battle has been won. These prayers we offer in the name of Him, Lord of the Confessors, King of the Martyrs, from whose life we get gain, and out of whose death we get Life.—AMEN.

"Whoso is wise and will observe these things, even they shall understand the lovingkindness of the Lord."—PS. cvii. 43.

LORD of all Wisdom! make us wise, that being wise we may observe Thy ways, and observing Thy ways we may understand the loving-kindness of the Lord.

All Thy ways are wondrous. One of old declared they were past finding out. Yet we can watch them. Give unto every one the open observing eye, the faithful trustful spirit, the joy in Thy works by which we may come to understand the glories of the Lord. Put it into the heart of every one of us who walks through the world, to meditate on its marvellous beauties, glory in its sunshine, rest joyfully in its shade, so that Adam shall not have seen it brighter, and in the Paradise of God the flowers cannot have bloomed more sweetly, nor the world looked more fair.

Let us read all that Thou hast written in Nature's awful book; and read it wisely and well. Thy works be very great; and yet we try to work a greater work. Look on us, Lord! We compare ourselves not to nature, for sometimes we think it is better and fairer than we, and we remember that even the birds of the air are cared

for by Thee. But we hear with joy that Thou hast declared that they are as nothing to Thy children.

In the olden days, when Thou madest the world good, Thou madest Man the last and the best, the lord over all. Lord! we have lost our dominion, we have fallen very low. Give us to see the world as Thou seest it; teach us to call nothing evil that Thou hast made, to call not that unclean which Thou hast blest.

O Lord God! we wish that our lives had nothing common, nothing unclean. We know what is good and love it; do what is just, and bless Thee for it; and yet there comes out some greedy grovelling after evil, some wandering after sin, some falling into temptation. Let our lives be all of a piece with our best desire at the beginning; and let the end be noble, just, and devout. Look on these variegated lives of ours, and bring them to the highest and noblest ends. We ask not that we should always have Thy name upon our lips, but enjoy that quiet indwelling fear and trust in God which colours all things, and leads us in everything we do, calmly to act and to wait, and to suffer.

If we could keep Thee more before us, we should slip less in presence of temptation; we should be

more calm in sorrow, more resigned in suffering. Be Thou near us, that we may conquer; set the true end of life before us,—to be built up, like unto God. Then we shall understand all things that can happen.

If we find petty cares and little sorrows in the way, and we rebel and ask why we should be plagued with such things, with swarms of insects with power to sting and vex,—let us remember that if we overcome these things, we are the better for them. They should teach us valour and exertion, and these are more healthful than to lie at ease in dreamy luxury. If the work of life be hard, teach us to rejoice. Let us remember what was said by John of old:

"I have written unto you, young men, because ye are strong, and the word of God abideth in you, and ye have overcome the wicked one. Love not the world, neither the things that are in the world."

Fill us full, O Lord, of a holy horror of comfort and ease, wealth and sloth; fill us rather with desires for battle and storm against injustice and wrong; and in our hard, short, severe life, let us pass onward by resistance to evil, rather than by selling our souls to Mammon.

From our tongue let no complaint rise up; make

us strong against unrighteousness, bold for truth, brave for Thy name, that some great and good work may be done in the world.

O Lord God! bless those who sit at home, full of cares, anxieties, and troubles. Help them to be patient, to quietly live, work and wait, knowing that Thou acceptest not only the strong men that do the harder work of life, but the children's pleasant praise of play, and the women's weaker works. They have a blessing, for we remember Mary sitting at ease; we remember Martha burdened with the toil of much serving. Whether we work and labour with our body; whether with the pen, or by preaching; whether the spade or the sword be ours, it is possible for all to be in God, through forgiveness of sin and repentance.

And laying all our works at the foot of Thy Throne, may we hear Thee say, "Well done, thou good and faithful servant!" Teach us so, that when the great Day comes, each one of us may hear that blessed praise, reach forth the hand for that high testimony; and that we may one day pass before Thee, sitting in Thy majesty, and hear Thee say, "Thou hast fought the battle, and run the race, receive now the crown."

Look in Thy mercy, Lord, on those in sickness

and trouble. Accept the thanksgivings of those who, having blessed Thee in private, now wish to join in the thanksgivings of the people.

All our prayers we beseech Thee to hear, as we offer them in Christ's name.—AMEN.

O LORD GOD! Who between good and evil hast established an eternal warfare; Who between light and darkness hast put a great gulf; between God and the devil hast put true enmity and hate,—show us how by Thy goodness the Apostles did work among the most sinful, let in light among the darkness, run the race of truth amongst the nations. They did show us how hard it was to walk amidst evil and be untouched; how hard it was to be true amidst iniquity; not to be servile to the strong, tyrants to the weak.

We do find it hard to tolerate our brethren, to walk among their follies, to bear with the dull; the healthy look down on the sick, the strong on the weak, the wise despise the foolish. But when He came, Thy dearest First-begotten, He did choose the darkest and the vilest, the most foolish and sinful, that to them He might bring eternal Life. Show us how Thou didst bring the best, in Thy

love, among the worst; how that the Gospel came as a physician, to seek the weak and search for the sinful.

Show us Thy marvellous glory that goes to seek the straying sheep that wanders from God, and may this thing comfort each one of us. For if the holy were only to visit the holy, if only into loving hearts the Holy Ghost should come, by that sweet Spirit we should never be visited. If never into houses but where God is served, Christ came, Christ to us would seldom come.

O Lord! we remember with great joy how He sat at meat with one that had done wrong; spoke kind words to the erring woman, had His feet anointed by one who had been a sinner; and we give Thee thanks that He did comfort the sinful, sit with the sad, and preach pardon and forgiveness to those whose hearts were heavy.

We remember that Christ came to the sinning. We have sinned. O Lord God! teach us to get hope from our folly; because we have erred we have a claim on the Good Shepherd. And let us turn to Him, and know that voice, and lay hold of that love. Let us hear the Gospel that declared that no more sacrifices and burnt offerings are needed for our salvation. The last priest has done

his work, the last sacrifice has been offered. Let us learn, O Lord! that man can do nothing for the sins of the past. The Lamb that taketh away the sins of the world hath taken away ours also Henceforth it is not by the outward work, but by the inward grace; not by pilgrimages to holy shrines, but by the doing of Thy great Will; not by a religion whose rites are costly and burdensome, but by each man laying hold of the Life that Christ brought, he shall lift himself up to be a true prophet, priest, and king unto God.

If we are tempted to think those holy promises of sweet forgiveness are too great for us, let us remember that to doubt that great Love, which before we loved Him, could send His Son as the greatest and most glorious Sacrifice for our sake, is to lack Faith; that there is nothing more beautiful than this,—that lacking faith in ourselves, we should have faith in Christ.

Then, Lord God! having received these things let them make us glad, lifting from us all the awful anxiety as to whether the sacrifice has been rightly offered, the beast rightly chosen, the temple rightly entered. We have now no temple to go up to; no unblemished ram to choose; no anointed priest to go in before us. All that is gone; and we turn,

not to the vain repetition of ceremonies to fill our life, but to Thee; to be taught that it is not by wearily dwelling on the words of Christian doctrine, but by greatly loving the doctrine of Christ; not by saying we have faith in Christ, but by striving to let the Christian faith be embodied forth in us, that we are to live.

Then fill us, O Lord, with the unbounded peace that can grow in evil places, and flourish in darkest days. Like the lamp to the feet of the Jew of old, it shall be to us a solace and a safety.

Have mercy upon us, Lord God! Forgive all our faults. If at times we do look back to the old Sodom, forgive us, we are but dust. If we forget Thee, we are but weak. And help us the more diligently to do good, to keep our hearts from evil, our hands from sin; and whatever our joys, Thine shall be the gladness and the glory, through Jesus Christ our Lord.—AMEN.

"A people near unto Him."—PSALM cxlviii. 14.

WE, Lord God, desire at this time to be a people near unto Thee; to feel Thee near us in spirit, over us in body; near, not only in fact, but in desire; near, not only in reality,

but in the joy of knowing, feeling, and loving the nearness. Be near unto us, not as Thou art always, but so that we feel it. Be near us, O Lord, as a friend is near, when we know it is a friend, and the countenance of the one brightens the countenance of the other.

Be near us as Thou wert to the men of old, when their hearts grew warm and their tongues grew glad; as Thou wert to Abraham, when he caught faithfulness from Thee; near as Thou wert to Moses, when he wrote Thy all-glorious Law; near us as Thou wert to David, when Thy mighty beauty, terrible splendour, awful holiness, and sweet pity, enabled him from that glorious harp of his to sweep the strains that for all ages were to sound Thy praise. Be near us, O Lord, as Thou hast ever been to all humble souls; near us so that by the terrible fire which goes before Thy Face, folly, foolishness, and sin may be consumed. Let thy nearness burn out the dross, make bright the gold. Come near, that our worldliness and selfishness may perish; that in the dimmest things we may shine out to Thy glory. Come to us so, that knowing of Thy coming, we, like goodly hosts, may prepare for Thee our goodliest gifts. Be near to us in life

and death; near to us in time of sin to rebuke, pity, and restore us; near to us in time of joy to purify and brighten, and make prophetically true the Rest that remains for the people of God; near to us in work, that every stroke given may be done for God; near to us in play, that nothing foolish may mar the beauty of our joy.

O Lord our Lord! be near to every one of us: in the house or abroad, by the wayside or in the field, wheresoever duty may carry us, or just and righteous pleasure lead us, there let it be our joy to know, God is near. And to walk through the world wisely, let us ever ask when we enter the door of any place, "Doth the Spirit enter with us?" If we know that as we cross the threshold, the Holy Spirit must keep outside, teach us to keep outside also; if we take up a work, let us ask whether the Spirit goeth with us to the task, and let the answer decide whether the work should be begun.

O Lord! let Thy presence put to flight the petty cares that eat out the nobleness of life. Pity those who seldom rise above the littlenesses of life; those whose talk is of the world's chaff, whose care is of the dust of the highways of life. Lord God! have a holy pity for them that think but

of the cares and troubles, the poor weak things of the world. Take these cares from us. Let us be of those that love the great heights of life, that are overcome at times by Thy great works; so that passing through life Thy mightiness may comfort us, and make us continually fight Thy great battle of Christ against sin, of God against the devil.

Show us, O Lord, that everything that roots itself in Thee will bear true fruits. Teach us how the beauty of summer is rooted in the blackness of winter; how the sweet corn-ears looking unto God have their roots in the grave. Let us see also, not their beauty only, but Thy wisdom in them, so that our life, rooted in Thee, may grow up fair and faithful, carrying itself to the holy and great God.

Accept, O Lord, our thanksgiving, that the yoke of ceremonies has been taken from us; that in a simple ritual and a noble faith, we have the "liberty wherewith Christ has made us free." Lord! we thank Thee for this liberty, but let us remember where the yoke of Christ should lie; teach us to know that it is upon the will and the lusts, and not in a painful observance of outward things.

Teach us that true obedience is true liberty, and

those who serve a true faith are the true freemen. We would be servants of Christ; we would be free. Teach us that all liberty won from the world should be used for service given unto God. And, Lord, fill our hearts with the hope of the Gospel, the conquest of that which is evil, of death, and of hell; the hope of the resurrection of the body, and the Life everlasting.

Be pleased, O Lord, to hear the prayers of those that are sick, perhaps nigh unto death. Give unto them such deliverance as in Thy pity Thou thinkest best; their deliverance to life and its duties, or to Thy heavenly joy.

Accept the thanksgiving rendered to Thee, by those Thou hast delivered from evil. Fill them with thanksgivings; make great their hearts in praise of Thee. And these things we ask, in the name of Jesus Christ our Lord.—AMEN.

A National Prayer.

LORD GOD! Who dost not show Thyself unto us so that our bodies can know Thee, nor the eyes of the body behold Thee!—Thou, O Lord! Whose glory is too bright for men to bear, too glorious to endure!—Thou, Who art dark

through excess of light!—draw near unto us, and let us know Thy presence in ourselves. Help us to declare, Almighty God, that Thou art present with us, because in us are thoughts better, hopes brighter, desires holier, than the world can grant, all showing that we are filled with something not our own.

We have never beheld that marvellous light that in nature bringeth forth fruitfulness; but we can tell whence it cometh. The earth, O Lord, grows glad again in spring; again the grass grows green, the broad fields smile, the flowers bud into life once more. We know that the River of God must be filled up to its old spring height; although we see it not except in the wondrous works of Thy hands. Let us feel that Thou art the gracious God that doth hearken unto us, and that we are so quickened that this day we can declare there surely is a Spirit with us, because there is a love, a light, and a peace within, which, when away from God, seeking after the foolish things of this life, we have never felt.

Most of us, O Lord, have wandered away from Thee; and while seeking after the devices of our own hearts, feeding on worldly pleasures, fulfilling the passions of our bodies,—we have felt that we

were lowering ourselves beneath what we might be. We have wandered far from Thee, strayed in our own ways; and when Thou camest, we hid our faces and were ashamed. But, O Lord, when we have striven to do right, there has bloomed for us a joy and a peace. Thou hast caused such blessed things to fall upon us, that it hath been shown to us that he who doeth right hath God, and he who seeketh diligently for the Lord will surely be visited by the Spirit of God.

Help us, then, Almighty God, to feel that Thou art here; help us to strive after the right, to put away that which is wrong. Help us to search ourselves. Teach us what are our greatest loves, our strongest hates.

We have loved many things that we knew were not the best things; we have gone after the foolishnesses and vanities of this world; loved riches and honours, the paltry adornments of life, with a better love and a greater devotion than we gave to justice, righteousness, and truth.

Look on us, O Lord, with pitying eyes; with Thy sad grace look upon those that dread poverty more than dishonour; who dread the cold of poverty more than that which is crooked and impure.

If there be any amongst us, Lord! who to avoid

poverty have thrown away the riches of a pure heart, and bright Spirit, do Thou look on them with Thy love. If we have done wrong, and covered it with smooth words,—if we have called lies and dishonest deeds by other names,—if there be any here that try to hide themselves from Thee, by covering evil doings up with phrases,—pity them! for they are near to the death of the soul. Bring out from their disguises all who do so.

Let us endeavour, O Lord, to add to the stores of truth in the world, and to diminish its mountains of error. Look upon this nation, and help us to do our duty from the highest to the lowest, and be not angry with us for our shortcomings. Look on the poor low sensualism of men in high places. Take it away from amongst us, O Lord! Look on the men whose heaven is in paltry honours, rank, and title; who have lost that which was good, and given it to foolishness. Look on the pomp and pageantry of this world, and make us to see its little vanities and utter worthlessness. Let the nation remember that Thou dost ever curse a people who, having the good before them, choose the evil: that Thou didst ever lift the rod upon a people who, having Samuel, preferred Saul; having Christ, asked for Barabbas; having Stephen,

stoned him to death. In our own national history, Almighty God, Thou readest us the same terrible lesson. Thou hast sent us great men; have them we would not. Thou hast sent honest men; we did not want them. As in the olden time, we have preferred the tabernacle of Moloch, and the star of Remphan, before the service of the Living God.

Wake up the nation, O Lord! Unite together the hearts of the people, not by vain talk of days of humiliation and fasting,—not with garments rent, but with contrite hearts, with mended ways, with humble doing, with low abasement; so that we may make true Thy great grand Word, that Thou mayest bless us, and make us a people chosen for ever. Look on us, O Lord, as members of the nation; and make us so full of love, that if it should go down,—if this dear land should at last be nearly lost, there may, as in the olden time, be found some righteous men to save the State.

Love every one of us, Almighty God! and make us so full of Thy Spirit, so great in our desire for what is right, and so strong in hate for what is evil, that it may run through the nation, and so throughout the earth.

O Lord, bring in, if it so please Thee, Thy

great and terrible angel of Justice first; but in Thine own good time, send Thy blessed angel of Peace, which the Lord Christ gave to the nations. Let Thy Spirit mingle with all our prayers; mingle in the cup of private joys and sorrows. Make it all the fuller for the mingling, and make it flow towards Thee. Help us to teach one another; make him that teaches, forgetting himself, and seeking no praise of man, fearing no blame of man—to declare the whole counsel of the Living God.

And, O Lord, bless those that hear; that without silly vanity and flippant self-conceit, without pride, and with humbleness of heart they may listen lowly to all words that seem to be God's,—try them by the Spirit of God,—measure them by the ancient law; and as far as they are Thine, take them to themselves, as a guide for feeling, conduct, and speech. These things we ask in the name of Jesus Christ.—AMEN.

WE most earnestly beseech Thee, O Thou Lover of mankind, to be mindful of Thy Church which is spread over the face of the whole earth. Be mindful, O Lord, of all Thy people, the

flocks of Thy fold. Send down from heaven into our hearts that peace which the world cannot give, and that of this world also. Guide all men into the way of peace. O King of Peace, give us Thy peace. Keep us in love and charity. Be our God; for we know none beside Thee; we call upon Thy name. Grant unto our souls the life of righteousness, that the death of sin may not prevail against us.

And, O Lord! Thou physician of soul and body, heal all our infirmities; watch over us, and heal us by Thy saving health. In all our pilgrimage through this mortal life, preserve us from hurt and danger. In all times and in all places, guide us, and bring us at last to our desired haven.

The eyes of all wait upon Thee, and Thou givest them their meat in due season; give us our daily bread. Renew and make glad the face of the earth, and strengthen us with the bread of the body, and the bread of Life everlasting. Help the poor, the widow and the fatherless, the friendless and the stranger. Turn the hearts of all men unto Thee, that Thy kingdom may come, and Thy will be done on Earth as it is done in Heaven.

We ask all in the name of Jesus Christ our Lord.—AMEN.

Thanksgiving for Love and Friendship.

ALMIGHTY and most merciful Father! We bless Thee for Thy good gifts to us Thy children. We thank Thee for the power to bless and gladden one another by the warmth of love, and the truth and tenderness of friendship. For the love given to us in our youth; for the tender care taken of us in our feeble days; for a father's watchfulness and a mother's care, we bless Thee. Let not this wealth of love be wasted on us; as we have received, so may we give. O Lord! Who didst see that it was not good for man to be alone, we bless Thee for the love between man and woman. May we know it in all its sweetness and nobleness; may we learn from love the lesson of self-denial; of preferring another to ourselves; of cheerful patience; and of toil made sweet by the charities of home.

Make our love pure, strong, tender, and true. Let it be constant in life, firm in death, and ever-loving before Thee.

Bless our friends, may they all be friends of God. May they be true to us, and we to them. Give us the friendship that knows no change; the love that loves even unto the end. In love and friend-

ship make us faithful; faithful to praise, faithful to blame; true and constant, in dark days as in glad hours. May all earthly love help us to rise to true feeling of Thy wondrous love; and may Thy love lift up our earthly love into pureness, brightness, and eternal Life. O Thou, Who art Lord of the love that lifts the lowly into loving life with Thee! Thou, Who art the Alpha and the Omega! be Thou our love's Beginning! be Thou our love's great End; and make us to love Thee above all, that Thou mayest be all in all!—AMEN.

ALMIGHTY GOD! the darkness and the light are both alike to Thee. Not so to us; we stumble in the dark, we tremble and are afraid. We pray Thee to be with us in the dark; not in the dark of the night only, but in the darkness of the day. Clouds of doubt pass over our souls; clouds of sin hide Thee from our eyes. We gaze upon life's wonders till we can see no more; we watch Thy glories till we are blinded with excess of light. Sorrow's tears dim our weak eyes, till at last we are but as children crying in the dark. Even then would we stretch out the hand of feeble faith; touch us with Thy right hand, and where

we cannot see, we will gladly go. Blind, we can sit by the wayside and cry;—dark, we will turn to the East whence must come the light. In the night, in the dark, in doubt, in sin, in storm, guide us by Thy right hand. And when we pass through the valley of the shadow of death, let Thy rod and Thy staff comfort us. Be Thou, O God, our Light! Make us to know Thee, the Light of the World! Always and everywhere lead us by Thy right hand, and afterward receive us to glory. —AMEN.

FATHER ALMIGHTY! Evermore we would strive to trust in Thee; and when for our sin and for our folly we scarce dare ask Thy help, may we still remember this—"We are Thy offspring." Whom Thou hast created, Thou wilt bless. We trust in Thee. When as yet we were not, Thou didst care for us. While we could not know of it, Thou didst lay up sweet store of love in the hearts of those who waited for us, and when our little eyes first opened on this world all was ready; the love, the patience, the tender service which we needed. Shall we not then trust Thee, Almighty! that Thou wilt make ready

for us in that other life whereinto our souls one day shall be born ?

While we do our little service here, and patiently walk through this the twilight of our mortal life, Thou art preparing our place in yon better world, and when we lie down to the quiet sleep of death we shall know no fear. Thou hast taken thought for us, and all will be well. Thus, then, we will trust in Thee, and we shall never be confounded. We trust in Thee!

Night by night dost Thou not work for us in the silence of our sleep? In the hush and in the darkness, when the busy hands lie still, when the strong will moves us not, and the pulses of our inner life do rest, still Thy mighty world moves on. At its appointed time the sunlight dawns again, the flowers unfold, the birds sing their morning hymn, and when we unclose our eyes, lo! what hast Thou done for us in the glory and the beauty of this newly-awakened earth! While we lay still, how Thou didst work! while we knew not of it, how this earth which Thou hast given to us has been clothed by Thee in the glow and splendour of the spring! Dost Thou, O Father, care for us thus tenderly in our nightly sleep, and shall we not trust Thee that when the deep

slumber of death falls upon us, Thou wilt still take thought for us, and make ready for our awakening into that eternal world which Thou hast prepared for us?

So, then, we will lie down to our long sleep gladly and quietly, content that, while we rest in God's-acre, men shall come and go around us, and our memory be forgotten, and the great pulse of nature go beating on, though we no longer feel it. For even as the world is new created day by day for those who live and move and have their being upon it, so in the upper world Thou wilt work for us, Thy sleeping ones, and make ready for us the glorious new life to which one day we shall wake.—AMEN.

ALMIGHTY! we give Thee thanks that we can declare with Thy servant of old that "Our hope is in Thee." Thou hast led us these many years, but too often we have forgotten the hand that guided us, and now we beseech Thee to have mercy on us.

If Thou shouldest count up our sins, who could stand before Thee? May Thy continual mercy lead us to hope in Thy love. When we are

weary of ourselves, help us to have patience, remembering that Thou art patient with us. Let the past have no power to blight the present. O Lord, if forty years in the wilderness do discourage us, and we doubt if ever our foot shall tread the Holy Land, let us remember Thy patience, so that we may not be tempted to throw down the burden.

Hold us up even to the end, and may the last song from our dying lips be, "In Thee will I hope." Grant us this perpetual rest in Thee. There is no shifting, no shadow of change for those whose hope is stayed on God. Be a true Father to us. Carry not our errors into the world to come; correct them now. Look upon those to whom life is all freshness, brightness, and beauty. Grant that the true beauty of life may be theirs. Look upon those whose footsteps, daily growing slower, are fast passing out of life; in quietness and in trust may they bide Thy time.

Wherein we have broken the sweet law of charity, forgive us, and for the time to come make us never weary in righteousness. Hear our prayers, comfort us on every hand, and at last receive us into the company of the blessed.—AMEN.

ALMIGHTY FATHER, before Thine infinite greatness may our poor vanity fade away, and if our foolish hearts have set store by earthly things, do Thou of Thy great mercy bring us face to face with life and death.

Forgive us all our sins, and cast them behind Thy back, lest they entangle us again. All our sinfulness we leave to Thy mercy. Help us that we may learn to walk lowly, and that we may look after the riches which neither moth nor rust can corrupt. Thou hast made us full of cares, we know not why; we have sunny days, but the clouds come again. Give us the spirit of the little child, that we may walk in faith. Enough for us to hear Thy voice calling Thy sheep.

Grant that the tribulations of this world may work in us patience. Help us to root our hope in Thy unchanging love which will never fail us. Touch us with Thy life-giving hand. When our courage fails us, and our hearts are faint, let us think of Him who "endured contradiction of sinners against Himself," and be helped. Grant that lowly as we be, our names may be written in the Book of Life. Love us even unto the end, and take us at last to abide with Thee for evermore.—AMEN.

ALMIGHTY GOD, if our hearts be hard, and the songs of Thy Church be not gladsome to us, have pity on our dulness; and have patience with us, if the constancy of Thy mercifulness has dulled the feeling of Thy graciousness.

Almighty, we could almost lift up a reproach to Thee. Only threescore years and ten in which to know Thy goodness! Only threescore years and ten in which to marvel at the summer in its brightness and the winter in its majesty! Look where we will, the world teems with wonder. Everything is a mystery, marvellously and wonderfully made and Thou hast stooped in Thy tenderness over Thy works and kissed them because they are so lovely. Help us to love them because Thou lovest them. Make us to delight in all Thy ways, in the winter storm, in the summer sky, in the little flower come again. Let us preserve the freshness of these things when the brow is wrinkled and the back bent. Grant that ours may be the open soul through which all the beauty of the life Divine may enter in; may we glow with David's fire and have the sweet and gentle spirit of him who leaned on Jesus' breast.

Be near us in life and death, and by Thy Son and Spirit bring us to everlasting rest.—AMEN.

ALMIGHTY! we do well to mark Thy wondrous works, and to gladden our souls with the marvellous beauty of the things Thou hast made. If we neglect to do this, pity us, and grant us a fuller knowledge of Thee. We reverence the works of man; our pilgrim feet seek out the places of the birth and death of Thy great children; and when we see Thy works, and the wondrous beauty which Thou with open hand hast put into all that Thou hast made, shall we not desire to know Thee?

Help us to make our lives more like Thy works, a Thought of God. Let us ask ourselves whether we give forth any fragrance of holy life, like the sweet flowers Thou hast made,—whether we give to others poison to their souls, or sweetness. Thou beholdest all things, Thou knowest whether some have been blessed by us, or some brought to sin and suffering by our means. Still pity us for the time to come, and make us more fruitful in charity, so that it may be a good thing to know us. Grant that we may be like sweet music to the soul, and drink to the thirsty, that from us may go forth a sweet savour of a wise humanity.

Press these things home to us as good thoughts, and if they bring pain and tears, let us remember that out of wounding comes true healing, and

through Thy pitiful love grant that we may rise on our past sins to heights we have never known before. Give us the true birth of the soul, into charity and self-negation which make the higher life. Thou hast set this lesson before us in the life of our Lord.

Let us walk wisely and well, and remember if we fall, Thou art very near. Let us pass the days of our sojourn here in holiness of living, looking forward to the day when we shall enter into the larger and fuller life which Thou hast prepared for those that love Thee.—AMEN.

In Spring-time.

ALMIGHTY, Thou hast already shown us the path of earthly life, help us that we may see the heavenly life. We bless Thee that Thou hast spared us again to see the beauty of this world in all its budding glory. We bless Thee for these bright glad days. Grant that our hearts may be touched, and that these sweet earthly flowers may remind us of the flower of the Life Eternal. Would that we trembled more at the exquisite beauty of the garment of God! Would that we could rise to the glory of the Wearer! But we thank Thee if

we may but touch the hem of Thy garment, if our glad souls have been carried up to Thee with the songs of the birds, with the child's gladness, and with the summer sunshine; for these things are the hem of Thy garment. Let no word of Thy writing be lost upon us, nothing Thou hast made be other than a Thought of God to us. We gaze into the faces of those we love and admire, and wonder what their thoughts may be, but Thou hast written out for us Thy thoughts in these bright cloudless days, in every flower sent to gladden the eyes of man, in the grandeur of the storm, in the sweetness of the calm. Let us dwell on these Thy thoughts, and never let them go till we have learnt from them all we can. Thou art very good to us, but Thou hast not filled our cup, for our hands would tremble too much to hold it. Our hands are not yet steady enough to carry it. If Thou wilt lead us up the shining steeps, then we shall be able to carry full cups of heavenly joy. Lead Thou us with Thy pitiful hand, uphold us with Thy Spirit, till we come purified into the land of the blessed, there to see those we have loved who have gone before us; there to see the little child become an angel in Thy warm presence; there to see the true Shepherd; there to see the

prophets and all Thy great and holy souls; there to take part in the heavenly song, unbroken, unwearied, marvellous as Thy majesty, and heavenly as Thy love.—AMEN.

WE beseech Thee of Thy great mercy, God All-wise! All-merciful! to let the words of our mouths be found acceptable in Thy sight. Not that they are words of wisdom, or the meditation of true knowledge, but that they come from the need of hearts searching for true knowledge. The heart of the loving earthly father is gladdened when the voice of the child breaks into stammering words; Lord, deep is man's love, but what are Thy depths! Listen, then, to our cries—cries not yet articulate, cries of childhood, weakness, want; hear them in the plenitude of Thy lovingkindness.

We say that Thou art Almighty, let us therefore feel comforted. When things of sadness and horror happen to us, and we wonder that Thou canst let these things be, let us remember that Thou art Almighty; let us trust Thee, and remember Thy goodness is over all. Our poor vision is short and limited, so, Lord, we rest in perfect quietness; what Thou doest is always best. Let Thy

pity and tenderness sink deep into our hearts, that we may be upheld. In time of doubt and failing strength, and failing flesh, and failing spirits, let Thy lovingkindness comfort us. Make us watchful as those should be, who must give an account of deeds done in the flesh. Help us to prepare for Thee, not by vain preparation of outward life, but by inward readiness.

Bring us all at last by Thy good guidance into Thy fold, so that whatever betide us in this life, we may have abundant entrance into the Life Eternal. —AMEN.

A Harvest Prayer.

ALMIGHTY GOD! revealed to us through the sweet harmonies of nature, through all the beauty and glory of this wondrous earth, through the noble deeds of men, and through Thy own dear Son,—hear, we beseech Thee, our mortal cry; hear us, not because of our worthiness, but because of our want and woe and weariness. Though we are but dust, hear the thanksgiving we pour before Thee for the glorious crown with which Thou hast crowned this year, so that man, lifted up from petty cares, may give thought to the blessed things of

life. From the dreary winter time, from storm and snow fulfilling Thy word, hast Thou brought this golden crown. Help us to see our poor lives in this; from our cares, our suffering, our sorrow, Thou wilt bring the golden crown of glory. Lord, when our faith fails, and our strength is small; when our hearts are heavy, when labour leads to naught; when the bud becomes no flower, teach us patience. Make us to remember those dreary days of winter, when all things seemed buried, when the springs of life seemed frozen, when the skies were dark and it was difficult to hope; and yet all things fulfilled their course, from the darkness and the cold of winter the earth came forth in glory newly clothed. So will it be with us; let us not doubt; Thy laws of spirit are not less powerful than Thy laws of nature.

When we are weary, let us remember God is never weary. Come when we will, Thou art ever the same. Thus, Almighty God, in chance and change, let our steadfast hope be fixed on Thy steadfastness. Let us ever strive to do Thy most holy Will, so that at last we may be received into eternal Life.—AMEN.

ALMIGHTY FATHER, nothing is too hard, too impossible for Thee. Pity and pardon our cold prayers, accept them through our Lord and our Brother. Have mercy on those who join in Thy praise with dull tongues, who listen with dead ears, and hearts unmoved. Have mercy upon those of us whom suffering has never touched, and pity never moved. Pity those who cannot even in Thy presence forget their own little individualities. Absorb the little rill of our private thanksgiving into the great stream of Thy public praise.

We give Thee thanks that little children know little of grief and sorrow, but we mourn for those to whom long years have taught and brought no wisdom. We weep tears of repentance for our sins and shortcomings. Help us to be sorry with the godly sorrow that needeth not to be repented of.

When we sit alone, and ask dead hours of their story, make us wise to get some goodly lesson out of them, some wisdom and help for the future. And when the recording Angel writes down our sins and follies, oh may some sweet tear blot them out; or better still, look at them, O Lord, with the loving forgiveness of Thy dear Son. And when the shadows of the past rise up and plague us, may

Thy tender mercy lay these evil spirits for us, and give us the peace which passeth understanding.

To those of us whose graces of youth and beauty are gone, give graces of life, and graces of wisdom. What life takes, let Thy grace supply. When we creep our slow way to death, let Thy spirit be with us, and as age comes upon us, and we lose our pleasure in the joys and gaieties of life, let us learn to take our joy in the joy of others. May the spirit of our Master be upon us, and may we learn not to be ministered unto, but to minister. Let the last few years of our lives be golden. Let them set in brightness of peace.

Hide the life that is before us mercifully behind the dark curtain of the future. Out of Thy tenderness towards us Thou wilt keep the joy or the gladness, the disgrace or the shame, the happiness or the woe of the Future, hidden from us. Only grant us what Thou hast promised, that as our days, so shall our strength be. We are children in the dark; put Thy strong hand into our poor trembling hand, and we shall not fear. Thou art our fortress and strong tower. Safe in Thy guidance we shall enter into the Life Eternal.—AMEN.

ALMIGHTY FATHER, from Whose eternal wisdom come all wise words and wise spirits, stir our souls and hearts to the depths, that we may offer unto Thee fit sacrifice.

Our earthly heritage is weakness and corruption; our fathers' weaknesses bow us down, and their sins we still work out; but comfort us with the thought of our heavenly inheritance. O Lord, when Thou drawest near, when we remember that Christ is our Brother, when we think of the Holy Ghost the Comforter, then are we comforted.

If our joys have been false and fond and evil, if we have left the Living Water for the delusions of life, cleanse our hearts. If our light were of Thy light, then should we indeed rejoice. Of Thy mercy fill us with joy that is holy, deep and pure, which cannot be taken away from us.

Almighty, to Whom it is never fit to come without confession of our sins, have mercy upon us when we humbly lay before Thee all our wrongdoing. Count not up all our transgressions, blot out our iniquities. When before us arise the ghosts of the past, those we have tempted, the hours we have wasted, have mercy upon us. Lift us up, that we may forget these evil things. When

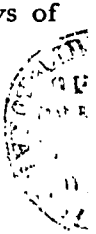
we look forward or backward, give us a good courage; let us remember that our destiny is our duty. Where Thou hast brought us and placed us, there is our destiny and our duty.

Help us to walk in quietness and peace through this weary pilgrimage of life. Be our refuge. Let Thy pillar of fire brighten our path, Thy pillar of cloud shade us. When to-morrow looks dark and sad, may we come to Him who did walk upon the stormy sea, who hushed it into peace. Then may He breathe over our stormy hearts, "Peace; be still!" May the wild waves go down under the sweetness of His presence, and through Thy love, offered to us before we loved Thee, may we enter into the Life Eternal. —AMEN.

ALMIGHTY LORD GOD! most merciful tender, and pitiful! look upon us with love, and when Thou dost behold how we do live, what can we pray but that Thou wilt not take us at our daily worth? Most merciful and long-suffering God! if Thou dost behold in us a proud and haughty spirit, overcome it; teach us charity towards all men. If the distinctions of this life

make us look down upon our brother, show us that we are all alike in sinfulness; we must all lift up our common confession unto Thee, We have erred and gone astray. O Lord! Who dost humble us in weakness, crush in us all haughtiness and pride; help us to walk lowlily, to do our best for man's service, for then we shall best be serving Thee.

O Lord, grant unto us the blessed gifts of this world in their pureness, true love, and holy friendship (the highest form of love), so that we may help one another through this hard and weary world, and at last may come into the joys of the Life Eternal.—AMEN.



In Winter-time.

ALMIGHTY GOD! though we ever confess Thy ways unsearchable, and though we often come to the great door that must in this life remain closed against us, yet we give Thee thanks for increasing knowledge of Thy ways, and for increasing reverence of Thy marvellous doings. O Lord! would that we were more open to the wondrous glory of Thy works and ways!

Stir us up to the meaning of this our life, rouse our hearts with some brave deed or story, overcome us with the beauty of all the sights and sounds of nature, so that our souls may be moved to sweetly sing of Thy goodness.

Sing in us, Lord, and we shall sing. Show us that this world is the glorious porch that leads through avenues of light to the light that is behind all other lights, even the Light that lighteth the world! Open our eyes to see the beauty and meaning of Thy wondrous works.

For the glories of this wintry day we thank Thee, and for all the marvellous changes that Thy wonder-working finger can create. And when we meditate upon Thy ways, how at one touch of Thy finger, one wave of Thine angels' wings, the earth shall rise from her slumber, the sky shall be brightly blue, there shall be tender green leaves and glorious flowers, and trickling waters and brilliant rainbow, rouse in us a passionate longing that when this too solid flesh shall melt, when this prison-house shall be taken down, we too may blossom forth into beauty.

Even in these dark, grey days of winter, spring is getting ready down in the secret places of the earth; the buds are forming, the green

garments of the earth are being prepared; and so in this winter-time of our existence, may we have a sure and certain knowledge, that a garment not made with hands is being got ready for us, that Thou wilt take from us this poor worn and sin-stained garment, and give unto us, through the love of Thy dear Son, the garment of the Life Eternal.—AMEN.

ALMIGHTY GOD, what can we say unto Thee but the old confession?—We have erred and strayed like lost sheep; we have given way to temptation; where the spirit should have been victorious, the flesh has conquered. When Thou dost behold us in our evilest time, oh, then have mercy!

O Lord, Who hast called us into being, Who didst frame us in wisdom; we walk in the dark, have mercy upon us; cause us to know Thy goodness; give us a childlike trust where we cannot understand. O Lord, our Lord! what claim can we lay upon Thee, what hand of merit can we hold out to Thee? How small is the merit even from man to man! When we dare look up to Thee, we can only cry, Have mercy! Have pity

upon those of us who know what is right and wish to do it, and yet when temptation comes, walk in darkness. Our morning prayer is often for strength and help, our evening prayer for forgiveness. Have pity upon those who forget Thee in daily life and duty, and only remember Thee in occasional praise. Teach us that God is glorified only in holy living. Help us to search our hearts, that we may not be self-deceived. May all knowledge of ourselves carry us to the good Physician, who has promised not to break the bruised reed, nor quench the smoking flax.

Look upon us in mercy, O Lord! when we find the burden of this life too hard to be borne. When our souls are dark and heavy, lift us up, that we may seek the good Shepherd to take us back into the fold. Help us, Almighty! in our daily life, that every duty, whether small or great, we may clearly see, and bravely do. We would serve Thee in little, and in much, and in all. If ours be the one talent, let it be offered unto Thee; or if we have the five, still may we lay them at Thy feet, so that at last Thou mayst say, "Well done, thou good and faithful servant; enter thou into the joy of thy Lord."—AMEN.

"With Him is no variableness, neither shadow of turning."
—JAMES i. 17.

WE give Thee thanks, Almighty God, for all the long line of holy judgments and solemn warnings by which Thou dost teach us that Thou art the One, only, invisible, eternal God. And though we are delivered from the folly of crying to wood and stone for help, may we not make of Thee a fond idol for our desires, instead of worshipping Thee purely and holily.

O Lord, our lives are full of variation and change, nothing fixed, nothing abiding, and we are often sad; help us to gain comfort by remembering that in God is no variableness, neither shadow of turning. God is behind all earthly change, the same yesterday, to-day, and for ever. As we watch the storm-clouds pass over the wintry sky, illumined here and there by the sun's faint glow, telling of some greater brightness still behind,—so behind the dark things of life, let us remember there is Thy unmoving, untiring love to uplift our souls.

O Thou true Father, Thou liftest the rod that we may be holy; Thou dost banish us from Thy presence that we may feel Thy absence; Thou

givest us misfortune that we may come back to Thee. Oh! that when we go astray, we may remember that Thou hast not lost true love for us. Thou dost not love us because we sin, but though we sin. Earthly lovers have loved us and won us to what was good and sweet and true; O Thou greatest of Lovers, draw us to Thyself by the strongest cords of Thy love. Let us so know Thy love that we may cling to it; so know and long for the Life immortal, that we may work for it. And if at times we are very weak, and Thy face seems hidden from us, show us the Good Shepherd whose life was all tears and sadness; let us shelter ourselves close to Him, keep ever by Him who did so greatly love us.

Forgive our sins, redeem our souls, uphold our spirits, deliver through death, and give us blessed entrance into the Life Eternal, that we may dwell with Thee for evermore.—AMEN.

ALMIGHTY and merciful God! when through Thy goodness we behold this wondrous world which Thou hast made so perfect in its beauty, and then look at our own poor broken lives, all marred and spoiled by sin and folly, we

cry: "What is man, that Thou art mindful of him?" But Thou hast sent Thy Son, to teach us that one kindly deed is better than knowing the glorious order of the stars.

O Lord God! we know that we are kindred to the dust; soon shall we go away and be no more. Our beauty and strength shall fade and depart strangers shall take our places, and weeds and green moss shall fill up the blanks left to tell where once we were, and man shall know us no more.

Come, then, Oh, come quickly, and help us to rise above our sins and follies, to trample on corruption. Give us to triumph over the pride and pomp of life, before "Dust to dust" shall be said over us.

Bring before our eyes the sad life we have lived; for we have lived to the flesh, we have done pleasant things that were not right, we have wasted our strength on that which has brought us no joy and no peace. Let us remember that they who live to the flesh shall die. Doing good never brings weariness; holy words have never been mourned over; righteousness writes no wrinkles on the brow. The flesh shall die, the spirit shall live. May Thy grace go with us and help us to

conquer sin and the flesh, that we, through Thy Spirit, may enter into eternal Life.

Help us to understand this mortal life. If this world seem a mere pleasure-place to us, disturb us from so idle a dream. Let the pale faces of the martyrs remind us that it is not a play-place, Life is a race to be run, a victory to be gotten a conquest to be gained. For all the pure pleasures of life we bless Thee; for music, for the child's mirth, for man's friendship, for woman's love, for all the glories of the earth, for all the flowers of life that do gladden us; but under all these sweet things there rest the great things of God, the wide world of Thy truth and righteousness.

Grant that when Thy Son shall stand at the door and knock, it may be ours to give Him ready entrance. Let the door of our hearts ever stand wide open, that He may come in. Let us not rest till we wake up to the true knowledge that only by obedience to God can we know peace. Cry unto us in mercy and long-suffering, until our ready steps go forth to meet the Bridegroom, and through the gates of paradise pass amid the festive throng unto the supper prepared for us. Through Him who has loved us, we offer unto Thee our prayers.—AMEN.

Easter Sunday.

O GOD! Most Mighty! but few are the days upon which we have not to cry for Thy mercy, or we perish. But few days pass without our sin and folly making us sad, without our mourning over our Father's house forsaken. Yet Thou dost give us hours of glory, times when our faith rises unburdened by doubt, when our ear catches some faint strain of the heavenly song. Let this be one of those blessed times. O Lord! lift us up to the heights of hope and glory.

We bless Thee for this day; for the door of the sepulchre opened, that man may see that the grave is not abiding. Fill our souls this day with the sweetnesses of nature. The bright warm sunshine, the freshness and fragrance of the earth, the song of the birds, all tell us that the stone has been rolled away from the sepulchre of nature, and we walk amidst present bloom and coming glory. The stone shall be rolled away from us some day. Oh grant that we may break forth into glorious bloom. Teach us that to live well is to die well; and give us to have part in the blessed sacrifice of Christ, and grant that we may get from it some cheer and comfort to our hearts.

May all rejoicing strengthen us for daily work. May we not forget the apostle's teaching, who, after singing of all heavenly glories, bids us come down to simple labour, forasmuch as our labour is not in vain in the Lord.

Forgive us all our sins, and have us in Thy blessed keeping, now and evermore.—AMEN.

"Thou, Lord, art most high for Evermore."—PSA. xcii. 8.
"Depart from evil, and do good; and dwell for Evermore."—PSA. xxxvii. 27.

ALMIGHTY GOD, to Whom alone belongs the wondrous word "Evermore," look upon us in mercy, that we may have part in Thy Evermore. Here on earth our cry for Evermore is one of sin and suffering; grant that we may join in the heavenly song for Evermore. Teach us why our joy is scant. Grant that we may never know the darkness of death. Help us to lay hands on the gift of God, so shall we live for Evermore.

If any of us lift up a cry, and that cry other than one for mercy, pity and pardon us. Surely we know man to be mighty and good and pure and true; then, O God! shall we not know Thee to be all perfect and wise? Surely shall we not trust Thee? The day will come when we shall look

back through all this weary wilderness of the world, and we shall see and understand why all this sin, and how out of this strange sad desert has come the Kingdom of God.

O Lord God! Who rulest nations in righteousness, Who dost hold all the seeming vexed things of the earth in the hollow of Thy hand, we pray Thee specially for the nation whose blood is our blood. Have mercy upon these our people in times of sore distress; help them to put their trust in Thee; lead Thou them in the perilous days that are before them; deliver Thou them from their sins, and grant unto all people in distress Thy guidance. Uphold all hearts shaken and troubled. May those who have murmured at lowly work and lowly duties, see that indeed the great ones of the earth are in slippery places. Let us all lay our burdens upon Thee, Almighty God, and be content.

O Lord, Who dost look into the councils of nations and into the nests of little birds; Who walkest on the mountain-tops and in the lowly places of the earth,—hear the prayers of those who thank Thee for their own private mercies. Guide us through this evil world, and grant that we may be gathered with those who have loved Thee, to dwell with Thee for Evermore.—AMEN.

ALMIGHTY GOD, have mercy upon us when we cry, that amidst the many dark and difficult things of this life, we may know Thy Will. If once we knew it and kept it, all turmoils would melt away. Let us give good heed to the words of the Lord: "Come unto Me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest."

Almighty! full of loving-kindness! we are sorely burdened with the past sins of our lives; forgive us, and help us to forgive ourselves, and for the time to come of our life here, to walk in the way that leadeth to Life Eternal. Give us of Thy strength, and if our faltering footsteps cannot go the whole distance, let us remember that our truest Lover has already gone all the way, and He will lead us.

In the hour of death and of judgment, be Thou near. Towards the evening of the day the darkest clouds do often gather; be Thou near to clear them away for us. Help us to walk in meekness and holiness. Let our desire be, to be the sheep of the true fold, so that we may come safely into the Eternal Fold, there to abide for evermore.—AMEN.

In Summer-time.

WE praise and magnify Thy holy name, O Lord! for the fulness of riches with which this blessed earth has been dowered by Thee. Would that we took more delight in Thy works, that we thought more of the unseen but eternal things which they shadow forth, that we might be led back through the beauty of this world to the beauty of Him Who made it. May the uprising of the fruits of the earth bring to mind the uprising of the Divine life, when we are breathed upon by God. May no outward thing pass from our gaze till it has filled our enraptured souls with some sweet lesson. May these fair summer days each bring their lesson, and may we, in going back to dreary winter, go back pious and content.

As we behold the skirts of the setting day, the golden glories of the sinking sun, may we think on the days of our life, passing all too quickly, without having brought us nearer to Thee, without having any promise of a golden setting. Yet, O Lord! some days have taught us love and mercy, some good, some charity; but would that each day as it passes could be made glorious by some sin struggled against, some deed of truth and

kindness done; these things would be to us riches in the blessed life where Thou dost lay up for us all our good. Take Thou the little good of past days and make it great, take the evil and make it little, and for the future fill our hearts with Thy goodness, so that there may be room for nothing evil. Show us how ragged and poor is the righteousness of man; the righteousness of God, how glorious and true!

May these things sink into our hearts, bringing forth good fruit hereafter. These and all mercies we ask through Thy dear Son.—AMEN.

GRANT us, O Lord! true part in that great thanksgiving of all created things, birds and beasts, trees and flowers, and of the lowly of heart. May it be shown that we have part in it by the faithfulness with which we do each daily duty. Make us never to exalt ourselves except in Thy greatness. Almighty! make us wise, that we may search all things for Thy will and pleasure; may the sparrow's flight and the lily's growth bring back the Lord's lessons. When we hear of the rest that is offered to the lowly-hearted, may our sad souls be comforted.

O God! Who dost brood over Thy children like some loving mother; when trust does tremble and hope is small, with Thy tender hand lead us, and when we desire to know Thy ways, guide us as far as we can go, teach us all that children can know. If we had Thee always near, then would the troubles of this world bow us down but little. Thou art very near, but open our eyes that we may behold Thee in Thy nearness. May this fair world ever show forth its mighty Maker; may all things show us how nigh unto God we are. But come Thou very near, that we may feel Thy presence; Be so close, that evil may be far off. Give to each of us a loving heart, and a lowly spirit, that the life Divine may be even now possessed; and at last grant us the quiet rest of those who sleep in Christ, to be followed by a blessed awakening.—AMEN.

For Grace.

WE give Thee thanks, Almighty! for Thy grace. Before we were born, Thy grace had gone before us, and prepared for us the mother's love, the father's wisdom, and all the garnered glories of ancient days. Thy grace

went before us in the love of Thy dear Son, in the father's care and mother's devotion, and shall not Thy grace follow us?

When this life is done, and we go to join the unseen dead, may Thy grace follow us, and keep our name sweet; may it follow us, that for the injuries we have done, we may be forgiven. May Thy grace follow us, that corruption may not hold us; may it follow till we reach the blessed land, and then may it again go before us to prepare a place for us day by day.

When we lie like little children in our beds may Thy grace send the holy angels to guard us; may Thy grace prepare for us a ford over the narrow river, so that we may see the Light that lighteth the world; may Thy grace follow our doings to make them blessed. May Thy grace day by day make us more careless of those things that do not abide, more careful of those that build up the heart and character.

Follow us day by day to guide our faltering footsteps into that kingdom which shall have no end.—AMEN.

ALMIGHTY, in Whom we live and move and have our being, it is possible to live, and yet not truly live; to have natural being, and not spiritual being. Have mercy upon us, and grant unto us here, in this strange life of ours, with all its littlenesses and faults, that there may be fashioned within us the Divine life.

We have watched how in winter-time Thou dost nurse the bud of the coming spring, and in like manner we pray Thee that the bud of the Life Eternal may be nursed in the winter of our life, and come forth at last in beauty and fulness. Quicken Thou us according to Thy word, so that nothing may have power to deaden within us the bud of the life Divine. Grant that no fulness of daily cares, no round of little things, may blind us to the sense of life's greatness, solemnity, and mystery.

If Thou beholding us dost find that we are not as we once were, quick towards truth,—pity us, and renew us day by day, for day by day do we waste away. As Thou night by night renewest the faded forces of nature, so quicken our souls, and make us more like little children, quick to do Thy will.

When our sins do bow us down, and our many faults weigh upon us, when the songs of Thy Church are too sweet for our sad souls, then have mercy, and renew our fainting spirits. Overcome the evil within us, and bring us, through Thy wondrous love, safe through death to Life Everlasting.—AMEN.

ALMIGHTY FATHER! morning, noon, and night the cry of him who loved Thee so much, but who sinned so greatly, was: "I will praise Thee." We, too, will praise Thee, and if our weakness and faintness make our praise but feeble, pardon us, O Lord! and remember we are but dust. Help us to do a hard thing, to praise Thee at all times. In the morning, when the laughing earth glows in Thy smile, praise is easy; but when the eye beholds dimness and darkness and gloom, when we listen to the roaring wind, and think of the deep sea and those that shall sleep therein, then slowly comes Thy praise. When things go prosperously with us, when the senses are strong, when our strength is equal to the burden, then joyfully do heart and lip praise Thee. But when night

cometh, our feet stumble; when the valley of the shadow of death comes close to us, and its vapours chill our souls; when life is a burden, and even to carry this earthly tabernacle is more than our failing strength can bear; alas, then with what feebleness comes the strain!

When the little child cometh and its merry feet and pretty ways make music in our hearts, oh, then we can joyfully say: "The Lord hath given." But when the sweet eyes close, and the little golden curls are carried to the grave and to corruption, then it is hard to say: "The Lord hath taken away, blessed be the name of the Lord."

But did we see all Thy wondrous love, how in Thee and in Thy will we live and move and have our being, then should we see that the threads that seem so dark in this great pattern of life, are but dark for a time; nay, it is but the shadow that this weary earth throws upon them, that makes them seem dark to us. Towards heaven and Thee, they glow in golden glory, and the time will come when we shall see their brightness. If we did but believe this, it would transmute all common things and daily cares to beauty and harmony, and we should cry "What can separate us from the life that is in God?"

Grant that we may in time of trembling lay our weak hands in Thy strong one, and do Thou guide our tottering steps till such time as we, through Thy goodness to us, shall enter into Life Eternal.—AMEN.

ALMIGHTY! grant that we may sing nobler songs than did Thy servants of old, that we may sing not of Thy wrath, but of days brightened by Thy love. The sting of death is sin; from that sting, Good Lord! deliver us, and help us to believe that death is not the anger of God, but a quiet sunset before a glorious sunrising.

Almighty! be near us when we confess that we have erred and strayed; be near us when we cry for the service of the good Shepherd, and bring us all safe into the fold. Be near us when we confess that the greatest of our sins is the sin against the light; we see the way, and walk not in it. Remember that we are but dust. Help us that we, whose nativity brings us so near to the earth, may have the better birth into newness of life.

We thank Thee for every vision of Thy brightness, and we pray Thee to make us watchful lest

our eyes become dim to the beauty of God. Of Thy mercy give to us according to our need, according to our best desires. What would not serve us truly, keep from us; withhold not the bitter herb of Thy garden. What is good for us Thou knowest; do Thou choose for us. Let the beauty of the Lord our God be upon us, and when we have gone our way, and joined the blessed company of those who have passed across this weary world, from God to God, let the works of our hands live after us. Lead us through the weary desert, bring us to the palm tree and the quiet shadow. Guide us with Thy right hand all the long journey through, and afterwards receive us into Thine everlasting Rest.—AMEN.

MOST HOLY GOD! one cry is the cry for all: "We have erred and strayed from Thy ways like lost sheep." Let not the largeness of our sins and errors make us forget the largeness of Thy mercy; our great need, the greatness of Thy supply. Teach us to trust in Thy love. Help us that we may day by day seek more after Thee. We acknowledge that without Thee we cannot live as we should.

Almighty! Whose it is to know each of Thy children, give to each the help and guidance he most needs. Comfort us if in the midst of the vastness of Thy kingdom we cannot help thinking we are forgotten; if our poor cry seems unable to pierce through the rolling majesty of Thy worlds, so marvellous in their going, so wonderful in their beauty. In the hours of our pain and passion and sorrow, in our lonely and forsaken days, let the good Shepherd come unto us, for He knoweth His sheep by name. Let us remember that there is no great and no small to Thee. The pleasure of God is in those that fear Him.

When the pomps and powers of this world go by us, and we look longingly, lingeringly at them, let there be comfort to us in the thought that Thou hast passed by the proud, and hast lifted up the lowly and the forgotten. Help us when we seem to be orphans in this world that grinds on with such sternness of unbroken law. Let us remember the gospel that was preached to the poor, that was light to the blind, healing to the bruised, and deliverance to the captive. Let us see how Thou lovest those whom the world has cast out with scorn.

We thank Thee that our eyes behold the time

when ignorance is passing away. The life of the land is for all that live in it. Thou hast given us to see the chain fall from the oppressed, and to behold the dawn of true liberty. We catch the light of the heavenly morning, and know of the peace that shall come upon the earth. May we hear the voice: "It is high time to awake out of sleep." That we may awaken to what is true and pure, help us. Help us that above all things we may covet the riches of God.

Forgive our sins, and let the beauty of the Lord our God be upon us; such beauty as we can bear, not the burning beauty of Thy brightness and Thy majesty, for we are all too weak and feeble for that, but the gentle beauty of Thy holiness and purity. Hear our prayers through Thy dear Son Jesus Christ.—AMEN.

"Restore unto me the joy of Thy salvation; uphold me with Thy free Spirit."—PSALM li. 12.

ALMIGHTY FATHER! we give Thee thanks for the words of the men of old, which are still so true. While outward forms have passed away, still sin and evil have held their sway, and so we pray the prayer of old: "Uphold us with

Thy free Spirit." Our spirit faints when we think of our broken vows, our feebleness and faintness in good, our swiftness to do evil.

Uphold us; the burden of the mystery is still upon us. Why this war and tumult, why the widow and the orphan, the desolate hearth, the broken hearts? Why do we still hear the cry of oppression, why are the poor still so poor, and why does life seem so little worth the having? O Lord! Thou knowest; let that be enough for us; let us trust in Thee, asking nothing, but that Thou shouldst uphold us with Thy free Spirit. And when death comes on, and all these threescore years and ten seem closed in a moment, when conscience is heavy and burdened, and our hearts do fail, uphold us with Thy free Spirit.

Lord, we need Thy Spirit everywhere, and Thou hast made it free to the proud and the poor, free to harlot and beggar, free to lord and king, free to publican and sinner.

O Lord, uphold us with Thy free Spirit that we faint not, nor fall, so that in the darksome night it may tell us of the coming morning, and in the blazing day of the sweet cool shades of night.

Lord, let it be with us Thy weak ones so, that at last we may come, not of our own merit, but

through Thy great goodness, through death into the Eternal years, to abide with Thee for Evermore. —AMEN.

ALMIGHTY! we do greatly rejoice that Thou art from everlasting to everlasting, the same yesterday, to-day, and for ever. We sometimes cast a troubled look over the mighty generations that have passed away and are no more, and we wonder where they are gone; but remembering that Thou art all in all, we know that, though gone from our sight, they are all in Thee. At times we look forward with doubt and trembling, but we take comfort, for we know that even as those gone before us, we shall all rest in Thee.

Grant that we may never go so far from Thee that we may not return to Thee. Grant that in all times of shaken faith, we may rest undisturbed in Thee. All our troubles Thou knowest; in stormy times it was hard to think so. Would that we were less moved by the changes that go on around us! Would that through them all we could go on our way undisturbed, having firm faith in Thee and Thy goodness! But, alas! even the changes in the weather trouble us. The fall of

leaves, a gloomy day, sadden and depress us; the bright sunshine raises joy in our hearts, and in other things we are sensitive to a little joy more or less. The fading of those we love, friends grown cold, all these things shake us much. We are like a leaf, tossed hither and thither, fading, falling; but what matter, if the leaf belong to Thee? Grant us more and more to cease from man and trust in Thee.

All we suffer is but for the hour. When evil things have the upper hand, help us to smile and remember that God is all in all. All we ask is that Thou wilt give us calmness wherewith to go through life. May we enter into all its duties with an earnest spirit. Sometimes we look with wonder at the care of men for little things. Let us turn to our work with faith, and what the Lord has willed, the servant will do.

Be to us all in all, our Friend when friends are faithless, our Lover when love grows cold; when life is faint and feeble within us, be Thou our soul's life. Come what will, may we abide in deep peace of mind and soul, ever striving to be sheep of the true fold, and dwelling in the hope of hearing the good Shepherd call us by name.—AMEN.

ALMIGHTY! it seemeth infinite grace on Thy part, that Thou shouldst listen to us when we beseech Thee for mercy, that our sinful lives may be purged; and yet we have heard, and we know that Thou dost beseech us. Thou dost beseech us in many ways, with the fair face of the world, and the gladsome beauty Thou hast put into all nature; and yet, amidst Thy wondrous works, how small we are, pitiful actors amidst marvellous surroundings.

Thou hast besought us, and we have not heard. In Thy word Thou hast besought us, besought us to live in pureness that we may live in peacefulness, and we have not been won. Thou dost speak to us through all things, and we are not won. Have patience, O Lord, till we are won to purity and peace. Thou hast besought us to turn away from evil, and we would not; Oh, beseech us yet again, now that we are weary, wasted, and worn, that we may at last come to Thee and find rest.

Give of Thy peace to our troubled hearts, and let the Comforter brood over us this day. Give us true understanding of all our duties, and strength for their faithful performance, whether galling or not. Make us to be faithful servants, day by day, till such happy time as Thou shalt put away the work, and close the gates, and shut us in, to the quietness and closeness of the grave.

Guide us with Thy right hand along this weary, dusty road of life, and receive us at last into Thine Eternal City.—AMEN.

ALMIGHTY! it is good to feel the lovingkindness of man; but, Oh, if we knew and understood all Thy lovingkindness, then indeed should our bowed hearts be lifted up. O Lord! if we did but see Thy mercy in the lightning flash, in the stormy wind, when death comes and touches the red lips of the babe into whiteness and silence, when the nights are a weariness and the days a pain, when life is a burden and the sunshine a nuisance, when the world is evil, when the dregs come through the wine, when there is no Elim and no palm trees!

Lord, make us wise to watch the orderly goings of nature, to see the things our fathers feared, and we fear no longer. Make us wise to see in our own story the same unbroken law. All things live in Thee. If we truly believed that, how peacefully should we go on our way in storm and sunshine, in evil and in good times, our hearts being stayed upon Thee, nothing fearing, nothing doubting. All things are Thine, poisons and their antidotes, the

nauseous drugs and the fair red rose. We behold how in the ordinary goings of nature the dunghill becomes bloom and beauty, how out of mean and base things, spring fair and glorious things; and so out of the sin and corruption and evil of man's sad life, shalt Thou not bring wondrous beauty and glory?

Lord, grant us truly to believe this, then shall we be comforted with Thy lovingkindness. And when the battle is over, and the victory gained, receive us into the Life Everlasting.—AMEN.

"The Lord is nigh unto all them that call upon Him, to all that call upon Him in truth."—PSALM cxlv. 18.

ALMIGHTY, we thank Thee for those blessed words uttered by men of old—

"The Lord is nigh unto all them that call upon Him in truth."

If we felt Thee always near, what blessedness would be ours! But what have we to bring Thee near to us? Sins, faults, and feeblenesses! Our doings are ours when sinful, Thine when good. Wilt Thou, canst Thou, draw near to sinful souls? Let us remember that one wrote of old—

"Thou drawest near to all that call upon Thee in truth."

Now art Thou near, for we call upon Thee earnestly, passionately. We are full of need of Thee; we are sad, sorrowful, sinful. Have mercy upon us, miserable offenders.

In days when the body is weak, and faith burns dim, what can we do but call upon Thee? In days of gladness we call unto Thee to tell Thee of our joy; but when we are sad, Thou drawest near, for our poor wings are then but weak. Be present and close to us, for man cannot take flight to God. In daily, hourly life, when about to go astray, touch us with Thy hidden finger and bring us back again. When our work becomes too heavy, and the upbearing of the tools too much for the poor workman, then, O Lord! draw nigh. Let us be quickened by Thy closeness.

In these days, when no angel comes across the plain, still there are gracious utterances of Thy nearness. Why ask for any other manifestation of Thy nearness, when Thou givest us the spring in its beauty, the blue of the violet, the green of the grass, the bursting bud, the song of the birds? These are Thine angels. Thou art always near, if we will but open our eyes to see Thee. Abide with us from morn till eve. Go not from us, or the poor flower of our faith will die. Come

and guide our steps, keep us near Thee, and lead us at last safe into the heavenly Land.—AMEN.

"Give unto the Lord the glory due unto His name; worship the Lord in the beauty of holiness."—PSALM xxix. 2.

ALMIGHTY GOD! of Thy lovingkindness stir and move our hearts, that we may render to Thee the honour due unto Thy name. If Thy greatness affright us, so that we fear we are too mean and small to honour Thee, show us that he who gives his all, even though that all be little, gives all the honour Thou requirest. The little flower that has opened itself to the sun has rendered all the honour asked of it. So with man; let him open his whole nature unto Thee, and he has rendered honour to Thee.

But, alas! O Lord! our measure is never full, our songs of praise are so soon dulled, our wings droop, our hearts fail; and then, when we think of honour due unto Thy name, we tremble. Oh comfort us then, and let us call to mind that Thou rememberest our frame, that Thou wilt not ask more than we can give. Show us that the meanest things done unto God, lift themselves up to His honour.

Help us day by day to set our lives in the light

of Thy most precious Will. O Lord, if at times Thou dost seem so far away from us, that there can be no communion between Thee and Thy children, let us remember that even human lovers, distant from one another, may walk by one sweet code of love. We may be distant from the everlasting hills, and yet Thy will may move our hearts. Far away art Thou, and yet littlest duty may be filled with Thy supreme beauty.

Be near us when the past comes before us, and the thought of evil deeds that cannot be undone, makes us sad. Grant that then upon our horizon may dawn a glimpse of the distant land where there will be time to bind up the wounds we have made. May we all so truly live in Thee, as to have hope that, when the day of Life Everlasting dawns upon us, we may hear Thee say, "Well done, thou good and faithful servant; enter thou into the joy of thy Lord."—AMEN.

ALMIGHTY! fill us with Thy Spirit, as Thou didst fill the men of old. They saw Thee in all the relations of life; then God was all in all. They looked on the flock and on the tender green pasture, and saw Thee; they said, "God is my

Shepherd." Let their spirit be ours. Lord, we give Thee thanks for our daily bread. When we are faint and weary, how marvellously the daily bread renews our strength, brings back our courage, and makes us hopeful again! If Thou wilt give Thy spiritual bread, if to our weary souls Thou wilt give the promise of Life Eternal, what comfort and renewal of strength we shall feel!

O Shepherd of the sheep! Who didst promise to carry the lambs in Thy arms, and to lead us by the still waters, help us all to know the peace which passeth understanding. Give us to drink that heavenly draught which is life, the calm patience which is content to bear what God giveth. Let Thy gentle Spirit be ours. Let Thy gentleness make us great. Show us Thy Son, and, abiding in Him, may we abide in Thee.

Have mercy upon us, and hear our prayers. Lead us gently when we pass through the valley of the shadow of death. Guide us, till at last, in the assembly of Thy saints, we may find rest for evermore.—AMEN.

ALMIGHTY FATHER, we have gone astray like lost sheep; seek us, lest we should not seek Thee. The saddest thing is, that we forget Thy way. When darkness gathers, and we cannot understand Thy way, make us wise to open the book of man's sad story, so that the past may shed its light upon to-day. Day by day dost Thou bring good out of evil. When the present is dreary and dark to us, and we would fain see behind the dark veil of the future, teach us to be quiet, and to have faith, and to do our duty quietly, leaving the issues in Thy hands.

If our work be done in obscurity, and we live with none but God to see or care for us, we will go on with our little labour with a quiet heart, resting on God. Grant that the tide of life may safely bear us into the haven of eternal rest.

Lift us into nobleness: may we do Thine errands of life faithfully;—they are not ours. Give us the heart of the little child, full of faith and trust. Whether we live softly and at ease, with many eyes upon us, or only seen by the few who love us; whether under the shadow of Thy hand, or in the glare of day; let ours be the quiet spirit that trusts in Thy goodness, confident that what God does is right.

Hear us, pity and pardon us, and guide us by Thy gentle hand, so that the discipline of life being over, we may be worthy to receive the crown immortal.—AMEN.

"The Earnest of the Spirit."—2 CORINTHIANS i. 22.

O LORD! lift us up to Thyself, that we may see Thy greatness and gain comfort therefrom. Show us Thy power, that we may safely rest in it. It is the strong hand that can safely and tenderly lead the tottering steps of the weak. Show us Thy mighty strength, that we may lean upon it without fear.

Lord, look with mercy on this strange life of ours, with all its shifting and change, like the changes in a summer sky. In times of rejoicing and mourning be Thou near to us. Lord, we cannot see the real life under the forms of life. We see the flower in its wondrous beauty, but we cannot see the indwelling spirit, the life which is behind its outer life; but in us, Oh let there be the Spirit of God made visible. Let peace come, and we shall know the Spirit of God is come. Show us that, if this life of ours break forth into truth and sweetness, if our life be of a Life not ours, there is Thy Spirit. Grant us the fruits of the Spirit,

that we may know it dwells in us; the Earnest of the heavenly Life, that we may know that Thou hast called us.

O Lord! if even now our souls can go out like the spies of old, and bring forth fruits of the better land, shall we not hereafter behold the Master of the vineyard, and be called among His servants? Grant this, O Lord, we beseech Thee, for Christ's sake.—AMEN.

"God is not the God of the dead, but of the living."—MATTHEW xxii. 32.

ALMIGHTY FATHER! in the days of His flesh Thy Son did say that Thou wert not the God of the dead, but of the living. Give us right understanding of these words of the Lord. Let not our hearts be saddened by thinking that Thou art for us only now. We think of generations gone by, of apostles and martyrs, and uncanonized saints, and these, we rejoice, live in Thee; to us no more passed away, for do they not live in Thee? We turn with glad thoughts to the Living God. We believe in the communion of saints; and that we may be of the number, we do beseech Thee.

Look, O Lord! in mercy on each of us, and so guide and govern and instruct us that we may build up an obedient life. Be patient with our struggles, and grant that we may continue to struggle into the path of life. Forgive our sins; they have been, and will be. Comfort us that we may rejoice that the mercy of the Lord is from everlasting.

The dead have tasted of Thy mercy, and the living shall taste it. There is mercy in all Thou doest, but our hearts are too stubborn always to acknowledge it. It is easy to say, Great is Thy mercy, when our spirits are unburdened; easy when Thy gifts to us are many, but Oh, teach us a higher lesson; teach us when our spirits are weary and sad, and the burden of the mystery weighs us down, to say, Great is Thy mercy. Teach us to sing in the night, when we cannot see the notes. Still let us feel Thy mercy where we have no vision.

All things are within Thy mercy, birth and, life, death and the grave. Oh, let us truly feel this and may we at last be able to say with sad valour, "The Lord hath given, and the Lord hath taken away." In the pleasant land, flowing with milk and honey, it is easy to praise Thee; but

in the desert, with the waters of bitterness near by, then it is hard, and we need Thy help. Oh, send Thy Comforter to us, that with patient and valiant spirits, looking for and longing for, we may at last attain the blessed deliverance into Life Eternal.—AMEN.

"Certain also of your own poets have said, For we are also His offspring."—ACTS xvii. 28.

ALMIGHTY! we bless Thee for that man of olden time, unto whom Thou didst reveal the great truth that we are Thine offspring. When because of our great ignorance and weakness, for the sin which we so often strive against, but so often fail to overcome, we do lose faith in ourselves, may we still remember this—we are Thine offspring. Whom Thou hast created, Thou wilt bless. Thou knowest our frame, Thou rememberest that we are but dust.

Father! we give Thee thanks, for how often Thou doest us good and we know not of it! While we wake and while we sleep, Thou art weaving for us this beautiful robe of summer time. In the dark, still, warm earth Thou art working; soon shall the flower spring forth, and

the tender green leaves flutter in the sunshine. These things Thou doest for us with no asking of ours; for these we toil not, neither do we spin. Father! is it that while we wait, and while we suffer, and while we sleep, Thou art weaving for these poor souls of ours some bright summer robe, which one day, not here, but far off, we shall joyfully wear? Waits there for us some land of summer sunshine, which yet we know not of? where the flowers do always spring, and the leaves do never fade; where, taught by angels, we shall quickly learn a song into which no strain of sadness comes; where, all white and fair, we shall be arrayed in garments not wrought by us, but wrought for us by Him whose offspring we are?

Father! we would despise nothing which Thou givest us to do; we would take pride in doing it well, for it is Thy work. But when our tired hands find leave to rest, may our souls joyfully rise to Thee; may some sweet hour of thought refresh us, some cool resting-place of prayer bring strength again.

We would serve Thee, but we are all too weak. Forsake us not, and we shall do better; keep close by us, and we shall one day do well. Let us be as a little child, who fears no danger,

and knows no darkness while a father is near. May our hand be held in Thine, may our eye be fixed on Thee. May ours be the quiet mind, the watchful eye, the trustful hand. And Thou wilt be very gentle to us, for Thou knowest our frame, Thou rememberest that we are but dust. —AMEN.

For Christmas Day.

MOST MERCIFUL GOD! Who in days of old didst open Thy visible heavens that there might come forth from them the glories with which this great world abounds; Whose mighty voice spoke words which Man's poor heart scarce dared to hope for! Speak to us once more those words which gave gladness to longing shepherds and to waiting kings; words to sound in our own hearts as gospel-true, of all that Thou hast done, of Joy in Heaven, and on Earth Peace, Good Will to Men.

O Lord, our Lord! how can we ever give Thee blessing for the Word which Thou didst speak, not uttered, but in deeds; for the things which Man longed for but scarce dared to hope to see!

When darkness shadowed us, and we were pining for light,—on us Thy Light did shine, that Light was Life, that Life was Light, Thine own well-beloved Son.

And now, O Lord! let that Light be our Life, for we need it. Year after year rolls round and brings its blessed memories, but we never find ourselves the same. The Church remains, the Gospels change not; what our fathers heard, we hear again to-day; that great song of praise lifted of old from amid those Judæan hills; the Book is always the same;—Christ Jesus is the same;—we change not these.

But this year not one of us is as last year; all fo us older; some of us wiser; most of us sadder; some looking forward with joy to manhood; others thinking with a little sorrow that every year puts them farther from their childhood; some whom each year brings nearer to the grave; some so close, they can already look down into the last resting-place where they must lie when dust falls to dust, and ashes seek their own.

O Lord our God! we suffer change, our hearts, perchance, are not so pure as once, the changes and the bitterness take our life from us.

O Lord! renew our life, and make it one with

Thine. Our life, unless Thou dost give us light as Thou hast promised, is sad and dark and wearisome, but Thy kindly eye will watch us, Thy gentle hand will guide us, and Thou wilt at last receive us into the glory of Thy presence in Thy kingdom yet to come.

Look down, O Lord! in mercy, on those whose troubles are too new to let them have the outward joy; show them that Thy Holy Spirit is not alone with them who are gladsome; that Thou requirest not a feast, but that Thou comest into the solitary heart, and into the low sad chamber, with such sweet means of grace, to be a Father to the orphan; a husband to the widow; to make the little place a great place of joy; and the little light a great light of the heart, shed forth upon the soul which resteth and rejoiceth in God. Look upon the poor; those who have few to love, and none to help them.

Look upon little children, and bless them all, and early fill their little hearts with love to God and pitifulness to Man.

Look upon all the sick and sad in their sorrows and their fears; on all who humbly hope and patiently wait, till Thou shalt take us all to dwell in Thine Eternal rest; through Jesus Christ.—AMEN.

"*Let Thy mercy lighten upon us, as our trust is in Thee.*"

O LORD, we, too, cry, "Let Thy mercy lighten upon us;" that mercy whose white wings are on every dark cloud that man's pride and sinfulness have brought over himself. Thy mercy standeth and knocketh; let ours be the ready hand to open unto it. Let our misery bring Thy mercy near, our sadness bring Thy sweetness, our needs bring Thy fulness. If it be so that when the soul is empty of itself Thou comest and fillest it, oh, empty every one of us.

All our life long our cry has been, "Let Thy mercy lighten upon us!" Thou hast heard our prayers for mercy, from our lisping childhood. Thou hast heard us in carelessness call, "Father, have mercy," when we put little meaning into it. But now, in the night time, in agony and anguish, when we cry unto Thee with our hearts, let Thy mercy lighten upon us. O Lord, still hear us! When the heart is sad, when the night is dark, when faith fails and courage is going, then still hear our cry: "Let Thy mercy lighten upon us as our trust is in Thee."—AMEN.

ALMIGHTY! give us the spirit of the little child, so that where we cannot understand we may trust. Give us Thy fatherly love, that finding ourselves in this weary world we may rest our heads upon Thy breast, and be at peace. Why Thou sendest us here, we know not; but let it be enough for us to know that Thou hast sent us here; enough for us to make our lives like unto Thine.

Men have to cry unto Thee out of the heaviness of their hearts, for they have been brought down by sin and shame. Our broken purposes, the weary burden of wasted hours, the failures of our life, all these things weigh us down; but, O Lord! in the time of our heaviness, draw Thou near; teach us the blessed hope of that Life Eternal where we shall rise from wisdom to wisdom, ever drawing nearer to Thee. Bind up each broken heart, and give of Thy strength to those who are weary and heavy-laden.

Lord God! whether we are joyful or sorrowful, help us to be patient and diligent and dutiful, and earnest to do Thy will, thus laying up for ourselves treasure where neither moth nor rust can corrupt, and where we shall find it again, more blessed than it has ever been.

Guide us through all the days of this our life, and grant that we may look to the evening of our days without dread, to the last sunset without fear. So shall we be, whether we live or die, Thine for evermore.—AMEN.

ALMIGHTY! Whom to know is to be truly wise, grant unto us that as far as Thou mayst be known, we may know Thee. O Father, have mercy upon us, when, knowing what is good, we do it not. In this sore strife of life be near to us. We beseech Thee, lay Thy gentle hand upon us when we suffer the plain way that leads a plain man to God to be darkened by vain speculations. Grant that by doing lowlily what we do know, it may be a stepping-stone to higher knowledge and better doing.

Grant us a spirit of lovingkindness to all men. Temper our pleasure that it may bring us wisdom; temper our sadness that it may bring us peace.—AMEN.

ALMIGHTY! Who knowest our frame, Who rememberest that we are but dust, we beseech Thee help us, and quicken this dust with Thy Spirit. Lord! we sorrow that Thy spirit in this world, its glory and its beauty, does not greatly move us;—we give more thought to the little gales of earthly idleness than to Thy heavenly wind. O Lord! grant that we may be more lifted up by what is pure and good, than by mere earthly brightness.

Lord! when our hearts faint down to deadness, when the necessities of life dim Thy brightness, then help us. Look upon those who are no longer pure in heart; look upon those whose faith is hopeless, because faithless themselves; look upon those whose sorrows are fast killing them; look upon the broken hearts. For all the sick and sad we beseech Thee. Help us all in that hard saying: "What time I am afraid, I will trust in Thee."

Almighty! we cry to Thee as did one of old, "Deliver our souls from the power of the grave." We do not cry to be delivered from our last resting-place, the grave of the body, but from the grave that has power over our souls. Let not our souls be buried in daily cares, in small necessities, and in

evil ways, in shameful sloth, doing nothing for God or man. Let each of us ask whether the soul within us is freed from the power of corruption, and from the bondage of an earthly yoke, and is set free for doing Thy sweet service.

We give Thee thanks for all the means of life shed upon the soul; whenever the beauty of the world doth lift us up to the contemplation of Thy goodness; when through the golden west we gaze, and the soul has sight of the heavenly things beyond, to which this earthly glory is but the portal. We give Thee thanks when Thou givest us grace to bear the labours of the day, the sad watches of the night, and to deny ourselves for others; for these rays of light Divine we give Thee thanks.

We beseech Thee to give us victory in time, over time. Teach us to bear all things and endure all things. Knowing Thou art our Holy One, we shall not fail.—AMEN.

ALMIGHTY GOD, in times of sinfulness, when we have been hiding from Thee, we have cried, Where shall we find God? and Thou hast shown Thyself unto us, not in terror but in love and tenderness. Where shall we find God but in mercifulness and charity? Where men love truly, there God is near.

O Lord, let us think on those words: "Cast thy burden upon the Lord." The burden of life is hard to be borne; we stoop, we stumble, we fall, but we have Thee to turn to. Our burden is unto Thee as naught: we will cast it on Thee; then we shall not find it heavy, or if it is still heavy to be borne, it will be only heavy to cause our better going. Whatsoever be our weary weight of hidden care, Thou only canst know, and Thy mighty strength will bear us up, for Thy Son did say those blessed words, that no sparrow even shall fall to the ground without Thee.

The comforts of God are always given to those who truly need them. The Good Shepherd calleth His sheep by name. Oh, call us each by name! the young, the old, the sad, the glad. Teach us how to weave a sorrow into a strength. In sickness and in sadness may our footsteps become stronger because Thou art with us.

Forgive our sins, help us to cast off whatever is displeasing to Thee. Guide us, uphold us, and when we lay down this weary burden of life and its cares, take us through Thy great love to dwell with Thee for evermore.—AMEN.

This prayer and the three succeeding ones were the last before departure for the United States, for an absence of several months.

ALMIGHTY GOD! pardon the praise that seems but weak, remember that our praises are uncertain, but constant is Thy mercy, and grant that out of a full heart they may come, and so the depth of feeling may excuse the poorness of the strain, and as we give of our best, be Thou pleased to take it for Thine own.

Help us in all things to know Thy will, and when we faint and fail therefrom, Have mercy, for we are but dust. And so strengthen us day by day through that which is good, and even through that which is evil, that we may come at last to stand strong in true righteousness, with the goodly hope of the Life Everlasting. Hear us of Thy mercy, through Jesus Christ our Lord.—AMEN.

ALMIGHTY GOD! let Thy goodness cheer us, Thy righteousness comfort us, Thy holiness uphold us, Thy pity sustain us; and make us wise out of Thy greatness to gain our chiefest joy, to remember, until we glow with the remembrance, that the darkness and the light are both alike to Thee. Not to us, for whether it be the darkness of the eye, or the darkness of the soul, how feeble we be, how fearful, how sad; when the dark night cometh over us, how we tremble; and when the cold chill of death is nigh us, in the dark hour, Lord God, what are we! When calamity comes and we lie low, when the heart is sad, and the loves are gone, and the idols broken, and the house is desolate, how little, how weak are we! Then, Lord God, it does us good to remember darkness and light are both alike to Thee. Thou seest clearly in our night, Thou meanest wisely in our sorrow, Thou lovest sweetly in our sadness, Thou art as light in our night, as in the day of our gladness.

So grant to us, Almighty God! that at all times of our lives we may comfort us with Thy love. And if the worst darkness of all be upon us, the darkness of choice, the darkness of wilful evil, the

darkness of foolish neglect, the darkness of those who go away from the light, still have mercy; even that darkness is open to Thee, for in the darkest day that man can know, Thou seest clearly the issue; out of that darkness Thou canst bring light. So, Lord God! whatsoever be the state of any of us, whether it be thick night, or there be but a few clouds; or whether it be a grey day, or a glad and bright sunshine, let us ever comfort ourselves; the darkness and the light are both alike to Thee.

Lord God! sweet it is for us who are but children in weakness, sweet to hear that wise child sing: "When I awake in the morning I am still with Thee." Thou hast not slept, Thou hast not slumbered; Thy watchful eye is over all Thy works at all times. We fail, we fall away into sleep, our strength perishes, and by-and-by we shall sleep the great deep sleep of death. Help us every morning when we rise, every glad time when the sorrows depart, and above all when the great deep sleep comes, help us to say: "When I awake I am still with Thee." Wheresoever we go, wheresoever we stay, in whatsoever state we be, ever let us remember, "When I awake I am still with Thee."

O Thou Who neither slumberest nor sleepest, but keepest constant watch and guard over all Thy

people, grant unto us the Divine comfort and the heavenly joys, that come from our remembrance of Thy mindfulness; and so being upheld, in the time of our gladness giving Thee thanksgiving, in the time of our sadness may we turn if it be but a dumb tongue, yet a longing face toward Thee.

Forgive our sins, renew within us Thy Holy Spirit, give us the peace of God which passeth understanding. Guard us and guide us in life, in death, and then at last may we know the great truth, "When I awake from the night of death I shall still be with Thee." So let it be for all of us, through Jesus Christ our Lord.—AMEN.

O LORD GOD, Who art very great, Who clothest Thyself with glory and majesty, may our nakedness, our weakness, commend itself to Thee, and may we be wise enough, so knowing our own weakness, to rejoice in Thy strength, that in our good days and in our evil ones we may still trust in Thee. That the good time may bring forth in us the fruits of praise and strength; that the evil days may discipline us into lowliness and wisdom, we most humbly beseech Thee, through Jesus Christ our Lord.—AMEN.

"The Lord is nigh unto all them that call upon Him."—PSALM cxlv. 18.

ALMIGHTY GOD! we have heard with our ears, we have seen, we have known that Thou art righteous in all Thy ways. The ways of our lives have taught us this; the discipline of our sorrows has made it sure, "righteous in all Thy ways." We have asked of life, also we have asked of death, we have asked of the morning, we have questioned the night, we have asked of the plague, we have demanded of the storm, and all have taught us, "the Lord is righteous in all His ways."

And if, Lord God! at any time Thy ways have not seemed to us righteous, if pressed down by our private grief or by public sorrow, if mourning the sinfulness of our nation, or the iniquity of our own hearts, if unwilling to be smitten, if rebelling when chastised, if mourning over the grave all too early opened, we have doubted for a moment,—have mercy, we are but dust. It is hard for us whose ways are not righteous, to remember that the ways of the Lord are righteous altogether.

Lord God, our heavenly Father, when we think that Thy ways are all righteous, and ponder upon

our own, scarce dare we draw near to Thee, call upon Thee, pray to Thee. Yet that wise soul, whose song we have sung, declares: "The Lord is nigh unto all them that call upon Him in truth." Now, Lord God! Thou drawest nigh, for we reverence Thee; now Thou comest near, for we are humble; sinful, foolish, sad, yet we can be humble. Humbled by our sinfulness, bowed down by our foolishness, crushed under the weight that our weakness cannot bear, careworn, tried by time, tried by weakness, we can be humble always. In all places, at all times, this is open to us to bring Thee near us; for "The Lord is nigh unto all them that call upon Him in truth." Now for once, and if it were but for once let the once be for ever, draw nigh unto us! Humble we are, but weak; humble we are, but foolish; humble we are, but sinful. Lord God, draw nigh unto us!

And if returning strength, or fulness of joy, largeness of hope, or brightness of sky, should lift us up, let it not lift us out of our humility. Give us no prosperity that can do that; no sunshine bright enough to lift up the head of pride. Rather the shade, rather the night, rather the grave, than that we should lift up before Thee the head of pride. Humble ever toward man, and toward God;

only bold to speak the truth, only brave to do Thy pleasure; lowly in all things, humble in all things.

"The Lord is nigh at hand to them that fear Him, to them that call upon Him in truth." Now, Lord! in truth we call upon Thee; not worthy, yet we call; not that we can receive Thee, and yet Thou wilt come. We offer to Thee that strange attraction; we offer to Thee that compulsive call; we are weak, erring, short-lived, feeble, foolish. Therefore, love us much. Why the rock, except for refuge? Why the great rock in a weary land, except for shadow? Why the strong, except for the weak? Why the pitiful, except for the babe? Why Thy mercy, except for those that want it? Why God, except for Man? Come to us, O Lord! Be near us at all times, and in all places, and grant to every one of us, whatever be our faults, our foolishness, or sin, grant to us a sense of this perpetual truth, "The Lord is nigh unto all that call upon Him, to all that call upon Him in truth." Hear these our supplications through Jesus Christ our Lord.—AMEN.

"Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man, the things which God hath prepared for them that love Him."—1 CORINTHIANS ii. 9.

ALMIGHTY GOD, we give Thee the warmest thanksgiving that Thou hast assured us that we cannot form imaginations more glowing than the reality of the Eternal Life. We give Thee thanks for visions of a fairer, brighter, and richer life, a more blessed world than aught we have yet seen. We cannot but thank Thee, that in reading of what is fair, we believe there may be fairer, and that in reading of what is good, we believe there is better. We thank Thee that when we get a glimpse of the earthly paradise, we believe there is a brighter, fairer, better one to come. We feel that when we do our best here, our best is stained with imperfections, and our cry is, while we live, Bestow upon us what is purer, more enduring than anything earth can give or take away.

Forgive any who thank Thee that they are not what other men are. Forgive the rich, if by a foolish misunderstanding of their position they despise the poor. Forgive any of us whose lot is cast in humble places, with humble work to do and little reward, if in any way we repine against

God. When discontented, may we cry to Thee and not to man. If we like not our occupation, let us remember that the sting is not yet taken out of our hearts, that iniquity is there. Teach us that there is no work into which nobleness may not come, no calling that has not room in it for grace, no place too full for God to come into, no work too mean for Thy Spirit to bless, no man too humble to be God's child, no child too low to be God's friend.

And when, in the journey of life, we feel tired with its burdens, weary of disappointment and trouble; when haunted by wishes that ought not to be granted, and by fancies which ought not to be gratified; when vexed by the scorn and contempt of others; when battling against foolish tongues, or more foolish hearts, may we forget all these things, and learn the great peace that Thou givest to the humble man. If our eyes are fixed with foolish gaze upon the things of earth, if we envy the rich and struggle to attain to the pomps and vanities of this world, let us turn from them and read the great promise Thou givest to the humble man.

We read of one who was called the friend of God. Enoch walked with God, as God's friend, and God took him. We read of the Lord Jesus Christ calling His disciples His brethren. All of us

may become children of the living God, heirs of eternal life, temples of the Holy Ghost. May we read these great titles, and so read them that the vanities of this world may sink down to their native nothingness, and that we, without any anxious care, may pass on our humble course with joy. Let us have one ambition, and let that be to know and to do what is God's will, not only sometimes, but always. Let us have one strife, how best to fulfil that will, how best to obey the laws of the Lord. So teach us to walk humbly, without pride, without foolish ambition.

Search our hearts and see what we worship, make us to know our idols, and see what gives us the greatest pain, and brings the greatest pleasure; let us ask what brings our tears soonest, or soonest causes us to smile. Let us know for what we strive most, whether it be for the things of time, or for those which belong to a future state. If we are now pursuing the foolish shadows of this world's joys, teach us the earnestness of life, and that upon it are based awful things; teach us that it is now while we are strong and in health, while prosperity shines upon us, that we are to provide for a future state of existence. Teach each one of us that life is no great pleasure-day, but a great trial-time for

the life to come. Let it not be necessary that darkness should come, to show us the Divine Light. Let it not be necessary that health and prosperity should depart, and poverty and sickness come, to make us know the riches of Christ's great gift. Make us wise in our strength to lay to heart the will of God. If we have neglected these things till night and darkness have come upon us, dispel the darkness, and make it bright with heavenly light. Be to us a pillar of cloud in prosperity, and in the dark hour of adversity be to us a pillar of fire, guiding us on our way.

Wheresoever we are, be Thou very near to us. Forgive us our sins, help us to forsake them; be not weary of us. If the battle of life seems to us to last too long, enable us by Thy Divine Spirit to hold out and to hold on even to the end.

Hear, we beseech Thee, our prayers; especially hear our prayers for those who in sickness and sadness cannot come here with us. Be Thou with them, send them health in their souls, and may every prayer breathed out amidst the groans of pain and the sighing of sickness and sadness and coming death, bring comfort and inward peace, and be an earnest of celestial joys. Hear these our prayers, through Jesus Christ our Lord.—AMEN.

At Midsummer.

ALMIGHTY GOD! Thy great gifts go forth from Thee upon the thankful and upon the unthankful. These blessed days have their light for those who know not their glory, as well as for those who welcome their coming. Thou dost send all Thy great blessings upon the whole camp of the household of man. Like the manna of old which fell from heaven alike for all the Israelites, for those who forgot the Giver, and for those whose psalm of praise and thanksgiving made daily mention of His name; so now unto us come Thy great and good gifts, and Thou askest not whether we are willing to receive them, before Thou bestowest them.

Yet we have to remember that there are gifts of Thine that Thou givest not thus. Sunlight and all the blessings of nature, and all the common gifts of providence, all of us can have. But Thou hast yet better gifts to bestow; Thou hast strange gifts, that Thou givest to the lowly and the humble, gifts that may never be thrown away, precious, heavenly blessings. But there are conditions to the bestowment. Thou wouldst not give all Thy

jewels to the unworthy, Thou wouldst not bestow all Thy blessings upon the unthankful. Pearls may not be cast before swine, and there are spiritual blessings which cannot be given to a fool. Give us grace to know what to request, before Thou givest. Our ears have heard of gracious gifts bestowed without money and without price. Our ears have heard of love bestowed upon those who sought not to be loved. We have heard of One Who so loved the world as to give His best-beloved Son for its redemption. Yet we believe that Thou hast gifts that Thou wilt not give except to those who rightly ask Thee for them. Teach us what Thou askest of us, teach us what to ask of Thee.

We know that we need pardon and forgiveness. O Lord our God! the troubles of our souls are many, they arise up behind us, the sins of our youth, the faults of every day. We cry out for mercy, and pray Thee to give Thy good gift of forgiveness to us. Speak peace to our souls. We rejoice to hear that there is always access to Thee for the penitent, the lowly, and the humble. So may we remember that to have Thy good gift of forgiveness, we must offer Thee our poor gift of penitence. In exchange for Thy blessings we give Thee our tears; be pleased to bless us with Thy

smiles. We bring to Thee our repentance, bless us with Thy great mercy. We bring to Thee our humility, and pray for the comfort of Thy Holy Spirit. Almighty God! we bring to Thee a poor earthly altar, and we fill its trenches with the waters of this life. Let the heavenly fire forget the earthliness of the altar, descend thereupon, and purify the offering.

When man has worshipped Thee in humility and truth, Thou hast been very near. Thou dost never despise the gifts of the humble. Thou hast looked with contempt upon the mighty sacrifices of the proud. But wherever the poor and humble have brought their gifts, though but a turtle-dove, or two small pigeons, or the widow's mite, Thou hast blessed the gifts, and made them Thine own. To Thee we bring penitence and lowliness of heart, knowing that of ourselves we can do nothing worthy of Thee, but that our sufficiency is of and from Thee. Do Thou be the object, the end, the cause, the reason, of our worship. Inspire us with Thy Spirit, teach us what to present to Thee, and do Thou accept the gift. Be to us words of wisdom, and give us the music of Thy sweet Spirit. Teach us all; teach us how to worship Thee, with what to worship Thee, and when to worship Thee.

Almighty God! be to us at this time our All in all; forgive all our weakness, and endue us with strength from on high.—AMEN.

Public Worship.

ALMIGHTY GOD! we do thank Thee that Thou hast put it into the hearts of so many of us to assemble together this day to take counsel of the laws of the inner life. We judge no man, but we bless Thee that our feet have come here, that we may take counsel of the oracles of God, to hear the eternal voice, and listen to what they of old time could say concerning the inner life.

We bless Thee that we have escaped from what has been surrounding us all the week—those great tyrannical necessities of every-day life. Give us to see this day the things that are not seen, the great mysteries of God. We bless Thee that this day the hammer rests, and the toils of men cease; and we would pray Thee that Thou wouldst make this nation wise to know the mighty blessing of the rest-day that Thou hast given us. Let us meditate upon the beautiful teaching of the commandment: Six days shalt thou labour, the seventh day shalt thou rest. For that commandment we thank Thee. We bless Thee for a day when the

bondsman may not be ordered to work; for a day when the craftsman can cease from labour. Teach this foolish generation the importance of a day of rest, "knitting up the ravelled sleeve of care," and binding up the wounds of labour and of toil.

Let us keep this quiet day; blessed day for the spirit; the great teaching-day, wherein we receive lessons and give them; the day when we ask about eternal things; the day when we can gather round the Cross, and hear of those things that our busy world will not let us hear of on other days; a day to lay down the fishing-net, and to listen to what the Master may say unto us; to forsake the streets, and gather round the temple-steps. Bless us by making us wise; make us thankful for this Sabbath day, and enable us to keep it holy unto Thee.

Hear our prayers for those who are in trouble; for those who have suffered in those things that death can do; the light of whose eyes is quenched for a while; for those upon whose households there have fallen sad blights, which it will take long to forget. Bless them. We pray for all those who by sickness are detained from Thy house; let Thy Holy Spirit comfort them; do Thou meet with them and bless them, and as they are not with us, may they be more with Thee.

Hear these our prayers, and grant us Thy blessing. All we ask is in the name of Jesus Christ our Lord.—AMEN.

BE pleased, Almighty God! by that power which Thou canst in a moment exercise over the things of earth and the spirits of men, to hush within our foolish and wandering hearts all voices which might hinder our cry unto Thee from finding acceptance at Thy throne. Remove all thoughts and imaginations which might hinder our receiving a blessing in answer to our prayers.

Almighty God! do Thou banish from our minds just now all foolish desires. May we close our eyes in reverence, and not in mockery. Let not our thoughts be wandering round the earth, while we profess to draw nigh unto Thee. Out of our hearts do Thou take all thoughts of others, so that indeed from the depths of our own souls we may make supplication to Thee. Do Thou search us just now, and see if there are any foolish ways in us, and cast them out. Thou seest what thoughts are chasing through our hearts; Thou knowest the imaginations that are coursing through their inmost recesses.

Almighty God! do Thou look upon those who, with knees bowed, assume the outward look of prayer, but who are not praying unto Thee. Look upon those whose foolish thoughts are filled with neighbours' faults, neighbours' ways, and idle imaginings, instead of their own sins, and the working out of their own salvation. Do Thou, by Thy Spirit's purifying influence, help us to pray acceptably unto Thee.

O Lord our God! we do cry unto Thee for Thy mercy, and that Thou wilt be pleased to cast out our sins, through Jesus Christ. O Lord our God! we cry unto Thee that Thou wouldst be pleased, by Thy mercy in Christ Jesus, to forgive all our offences. So teach us the guilt of sin, that though we may feel Thou art never weary of forgiving, we may also feel that there are times when we may almost despair of forgiveness, by our obstinate persistence in our sins. So teach us to live, that we may conquer our sins. So impress us with Thy mercy, that we may overcome the evil propensities of our nature. Fill our hearts with such deep love of Thee, that there may be no room any longer for the idols we have served. Teach us to cast out everything that stands between Thee and us, however loved and worshipped. Let us remem-

ber that there should be the supreme place in our hearts for Thee. Lord, do Thou occupy it in each of us.

Almighty God! we pray Thee to accept whatever we have done in the past week that was right. Accept that which we have done by which we meant to serve Thee; accept what we have done which was intended to do good to others; accept that which was worthy of Thy blessing, and which was meant to give Thee praise. That any of us should be led to do any such things, we bless Thee.

Lord, we can bring Thee but our duties for an offering, and of these the holiest and the loftiest are not worthy of Thine acceptance. But if Thou art pleased to take our duties as our graces, if Thou art pleased to call our debts our gifts, and to accept them upon Thine altar, we give Thee praise; and we offer Thee our thanksgiving, if we have done any good. If we have said some right things, and fallen into other unholy ones, do Thou accept the good, and give us sorrow of heart for the evil.

Help and enlighten those who boast of the goodness of their living. Grant that all these tares may be rooted up, and that foolishness may no longer beguile our wisdom.

Almighty God! we cry unto Thee the old cry—"Unite our hearts to fear Thy name." We mourn a disobedient spirit to-day; we serve Thee to-morrow. To-day we bless Thy name; to-morrow we take it in vain. To-day we have holy communion with Thee; to-morrow we are seduced into evil. So has it been with us these many years. Help us to overcome this; teach us that any day and every day is the right time to begin the work of examining our hearts and turning away from evil.

Teach us the great forces there are in Christ's Gospel to assist those who strive to overcome their sins. Make us to search our hearts diligently, knowing the great issues of life do all go forth from them.

Save us from all false notions of our duties; especially save us from measuring our own duties by our neighbour's shortcomings. Save us from that unprofitable state of conscience which would lead us to suppose that, because others are doing evil, we are excused from obeying the truth and walking in the paths of holiness. Grant that we may look to our own eyes, rather than to the eyes of others. Help us to root out that pestilent habit of constantly intermeddling with the sins and

doings of others, which, turning us into Pharisees hides from us the blessed thoughts of God, because we are only contemplating evil.

Do Thou help us, where Thou seest help is needed. Teach us to keep our hearts with all diligence, at all times; in prosperity, lest we rest upon earthly things to the forgetting of God; in adversity, lest we think the heavens have forgotten us, because the light is so long in returning. Whatever we do, help us to watch over our hearts, because out of them are the issues of life.

We worship Thee with joy and gladness, because Thou knowest us altogether; Thou seest all our hearts. Bless each of us. Thou knowest the condition of each one of us; be a present help to all. Grant that Thy heavenly light may brighten as the earthly light fades.

Bless the young amongst us; give them abundant joy; show them the true end of life, and the blessedness of obeying Thy law. Let their strong joy be chastened by love to Thee. Bless those who mourn for the loss of loved ones; comfort them. Bless those who mourn for their sins, who sorrow, weep, and vow, and repent. For that repentance, those vows, that weeping, and that sorrow, we give Thee blessing. Thou hast not

deserted us, but out of this sorrow, weeping, vows, and repentance, Thou wilt bring forth a blessed result, and give us strength that shall keep us from falling, and enable us to stand.

Bless those who are about to leave this, for other lands. May Thy blessing accompany them. Bless those who are far away. Bless those whose households are newly formed; let Thy holy will be their law. Bless those who see their households breaking up; teach them to rest more closely upon the household of faith. Whatever our state may be, leave us not during the rest of our journey through this life. If we are near the entrance into the long life of a future state, grant that we may live without sin, as little children abiding their Father's time, and dwelling in the light of their Father's countenance. These blessings we ask, in the name of Jesus Christ our Lord.—AMEN.

ALMIGHTY GOD! it is a joy to us to know the great names the ancients gave Thee. We know them all to be most blessed names. Nothing they said of Thee in their best hours, or deepest thoughts, but we find it true.

They called Thee Fountain of Light. We know

Thee to be such. Be such to us this day. We have no light in ourselves. The Light is Thine, the Life is Thine, and the world doth waste that light, and work doth take the life away from us.

We have worked another week. To some of us our labours have been hard. Some have done heavy duties, faithfully and well. Many of us have done what we should not; have laboured not wisely, have fallen into sin. Our work and waste, our sins and straits, have all taken life out of us. O Lord! send us Thy Life. Shine upon us to-day, with the light that knows no darkness. O Lord! we come up empty to Thee, that Thou mayest fill us. All we do doth waste us; every hour runs a sand more to our death. When we would do that which is right, we are weak; when good we would do, evil cometh; our strength is spent in our struggles. As with the men of old, when they healed, virtue went out from them, so is our strength worn away even in Thy service. We have sought our own strength, trusted in our own power, and they have failed us. We are altogether weak; weak in body, weak in soul, weak in will. The body tries, the will is feeble, the soul is faint. We mean well, but fail in the doing. Teach us, O Lord, to love good, to hate evil. At

times we are brave, at others cowardly; make us strong in Thy strength. Fountain of Life, we come to Thee. Fill us this day with Thy might, fill the soul with Thy strength; make our wills strong, and making them so,—to be Thine.

Fill our hearts with love this day, with Thine own great Love fill them; make them full of the love of others.

The heart of man, O Lord, is a mighty deep; but Thy great love is infinite. Oh give us the light that knows no darkness; a light to read the law of life, to see the joys of righteousness. Let us ponder on the grand old words—

"In Thy light we shall see light."

Lord, when we go from Thy light, we have but darkness; when we step out of the sunshine of Thy law and countenance, then we see the creeping unclean things, sin, iniquity, death. In Thy bright light we see nought that is foul; but a glorious testimony, a holy communion, a lovely life, a blessed immortality. In Thy light we see not the evil birds of night; but the sweet dove of the Holy Ghost, the olive branch, the palm tree. In that light we see Thy marvellous love, Thy might, Thy mercy, Thy carefulness, even to the sparrow that falls not without Thy heeding.

O Lord! in the olden time, men said Thy tender mercies were round about them as a safe mountain. Be a mountain unto us. Be a screen from the fiery sun, a shelter from the bitter winds, forth from Thee let the sweet streams flow that bring fruitfulness and healing. We are weak and would be strengthened; exposed, and would be sheltered; weary, and seek to drink at Thy streams; weak, and would repose us on Thy love.

O Lord God! we do bless Thee for Thy great gift of the Gospel to all the world, giving Thee thanks that Thou didst break down the middle wall of partition that separated Jew from Gentile, and all from God. If we have raised any middle wall of partition; if where Jews had sacrifices, we have man's doctrines, and have raised the vain divisions of sects and parties, send again some apostle of might and power, to preach unity to the Church; teach us the spirit that was in Christ; and that all who fear that name, and serve Thee in that name, have but one faith, and one Shepherd alone.

O God! hear our prayer for our dear land. Raise up prophets that shall lift up their voices and spare not. Send some true Son of Consolation to us. Make our rulers greater, deliver us,

from fools, save us from the frivolous. Look on the people, their evil ways, their many sins, their manifold temptations. Take them into better paths, pardon their iniquities, make their means of misdoing less. Bless the poor in these hard days, bless the rich with a bountiful spirit. Breathe into us the true patriotism, the true love of our land. Almighty God! send forth Thy peace, if it be Thy pleasure. Close these troublous wars, and give us peace; but send us only that peace that cometh after justice, the peace that followeth righteousness. Send Thy awful pioneers first, justice and truth; send justice before peace, like John the Baptist before Thy Christ. And then, when right and justice have done their work, and gone their way, send blessed peace, with glorious joy and holy hope. Teach the world that while folly sits in high places, and knavery rules, there can be no hope of a blessed and lasting peace.

Wake the nation up, O Lord, to know the true greatness of peoples; that it is not in wealth and pomp that its grandeur lies; that not the merchandise of Tyre, the riches of Sodom, the might of Gomorrah, the pomp of Rome, the palaces of Greece, the splendour of Assyria, could save them from going down to destruction;—

that it is not the multitude of the people, the greatness of their wealth, the extent of their dominions;—but holiness and purity, house life and Church life, holy, divine, and true, that can save the life of a Nation.

O Lord! in weary days let Christ's name be more known. In sad hours hear the prayers of those that desire deliverance from sickness. Receive the thanksgiving of those that bring to Thee the vows and the hopes, the repentance and the desires they made in times of sickness and distress. Let them know strength again as they again go among the living. Make them strong in Thy strength.

O Lord God! forgive our sins, be with us in our temptations, be merciful to us, and make us merciful to one another.

We ask it in Christ's name.—AMEN.

The Changeless God.

ALMIGHTY GOD, we cry unto Thee, as did the men of old; for our wants, our woes, our weariness, our hopes, our joys, are much to us. For the change of outward things has touched

but little the human soul; and if sacrifices have passed away for us, and the Priest no longer is with us, still the soul cries out to know whether we are friendly with God, and whether there is a way open for the soul of Man to the Holiest of all.

Almighty God! Thou hast ordered our life wisely and well, but we see it not always. Thou hast given us a time of such gladness in this old earth that we cry aloud at Thy bounty, and then the things that change—and we change more than the things that change—make us cry out as did he of old, "I am a stranger with Thee, and a sojourner, as all my fathers were." Lord God! there be times when we thank Thee for all things, when life is good and time is lovely, and the world is fair and things are as the soul would have them.

And yet, Lord God! when we come to take our ease, seeming to think this is our abiding-place, again there sounds the knell of change and we must arise and go; and so we must pass on, even unto death.

And now we ask wisdom, that, knowing these things, we may face them, work under them, and, if we learn not at least to love them, nevertheless may learn to be obedient and faithful;

and in the changes that come over us and in time of trouble, Lord God! make us wise enough to look on them, and if we cannot look on them and love them, yet graciously give us patience to sit down under their burden.

All things suffer change, and we, Lord, must suffer the greatest; and as day by day these changes come and make us turn with more passionate desire to the changeless God; as the friends of our youth fast pass away, and the band that remains is very small; as old lovers depart and we find it hard to make new friends, for the uprooted tree is hard to root again; as we find things that were once familiar to us have grown strange, and the place of our childhood is altered and we hardly know it, bearing the same name but no longer to us the same; as all these outward changes are upon us, O Lord! we turn to Thee and behold no change!

Lord! make us wise, beneath the changes of religion and creed and sect, beneath the changes of law and institutions and the outward face of things, to see often in the human heart the same old loves and desires, the same passions, the same principles, and to hear the same prayers; and, looking often at that sameness, may we turn

unto Thee; and, behind the dim clouds that men call religion, may we behold the face of the eternal Lover beaming ever upon His child, weak, sinful Man.

So that when the clouds have made us weary with our watching, when the tempest of life has shaken all things within us by its violence, when the rough winter wind has troubled us, then beyond these things may we behold the eternal City of the changeless God, and have hope that we, through Thy good guidance, may come at last into the Haven of the eternal Peace.

Lord God! we beseech Thee for the lowly spirit that through all change, through all doubt and darkness, can still trust in God. Were it not good for us that there should be darkness, why should it be? Were not the cold good for us, why should it be? And if evil were not working for good, why should it exist? We are quite ignorant of these things, we cannot know them as they should be known. Shine upon us through Thy works, O Lord! Uplift us above the storm and stress and stir of time, so that, undamaged by the violence and the vehemence of men, we may learn to live in inward peace, until such time as we shall have attained into our eternal

Rest, after all our restlessness of spirit, our vain ambitions, and our idle desires.

Teach us more and more that the greatest deeds are those which most men can reach to do, and that the things which do excite men are things that be of little worth. So may we learn the beauty of mercy, and lowliness, and lovingkindness.

Forgive our sins, comfort us in our troubles uphold us in our work, shed the light of Thy countenance upon us. We ask it in Christ's name.—AMEN.

O LORD our God! we bless Thee that by Thy grace we can feel Thy presence in the soul. Make us feel what treasures there are within us which we have not yet found out, and let them be to us an earnest of that blessed life into which we hope to enter.

O Lord! what were this poor short earthly life if Thou hadst not promised to us an eternal life? Without Thee what were the sun but a poor lamp? But, Lord, if Thou art, and we know that Thou art, then is the sun a light to guide us in the right way.

Without Thee what were the moon? We

watch it and it grows; we watch it and it fades away, subject, like us, to chance and change. But Lord, if Thou art, and we know that Thou art, then is the moon to us a light set by Thee to guide the traveller across the deep.

Without Thee, what were the stars? We know not what they are; but we look at them and they look at us, and we love them, for Thou hast set them there.

This world, O Lord, is fair, and there are times when we feel that it is good to be here; but without Thee what were it? It opens to give us food, and it opens to receive our loved ones; and the storm comes, and the tempest carries away our treasures, and we are driven forward to our eternal home. But, Lord, if Thou art, and we know that Thou art, then this world is to us the house where Thou hast placed us for a time to discipline our souls.

Without Thee, what were our work? But, Lord, if Thou art, and we know that Thou art, then is our duty the service appointed to us by the great Taskmaster. Brighten for us this day our duty, since it is the lot which Thou hast appointed us, the road that Thou wouldst have us to walk in.

Without Thee, what were all these sorrows and pains and troubles? But, Lord, if Thou art, and we know that Thou art, then are they the rod with which Thou dost in mercy chastise us. Make us to believe these things in our innermost souls, we pray Thee, for Christ's sake.—AMEN.

A Prayer for the Nation.

ALMIGHTY GOD! give us now not only to know Thy mighty names; but to feel into our very hearts all their significance and all their comfort.

We call Thee Lord! Almighty! and in that is comfort. Comfort us with Thy Almightiness; for we are weak. That which we would, we do not; that which we should do, is more than we can. Everywhere Thou hast set before us great hopes, longing desires; and we come not near our wishes; our will we cannot carry into performance. We would serve, and have not the power; save, and have not the means; in evil days we would do good, but cannot. Therefore, O Lord God! we pray that what we aim at should be that Thou proposest; what we would pull down, that Thou

wouldst destroy; that which we love, should be that Thou wouldst uphold. Praying for these things, and knowing that Thou art the Lord Almighty, we rejoice in Thy might, and take comfort from our weakness in Thy strength. In Thy Almightiness we are mighty; in Thy great power our weakness is overcome. We call Thee Lord God Almighty, Omniscient, the All-seeing God; and out of Thy Names would we comfort ourselves.

That Thou art the All-seeing God, makes us afraid at first, for a time; that Thou seest into our hearts' deepest workings, their most secret ways, watching the thought before it is born, the deed before it is done, the word before it is spoken. And yet we turn, and call Thee All-seeing, and comfort ourselves thereby. Man doth not see all we think; or note all we attempt. He seeth but little, and he misreads and misinterprets; he knoweth not all, and false conclusions follow.

But Thou, O God, lookest into our hearts, and seest blackness the world doth not see; Thou searchest our wishes, watchest our aims, knowest our temptations. Thou lookest, and seest germs of Thy grace that the world doth not see. If, then, O Lord! Thou seest in us the least bud of Thy

love, the littlest germ of Thy grace, it will be enough for Thee, to make it blossom and bear fruit to Thy glory. Look on the worst of us, and see that sometimes we do long with a passion for Thy goodness, sigh with a passion for Thy holiness, long with fond wishes for Thy love. Look on us, and see that we would fain hope aright, work well, aim truly. Breathe on these the buds of Thy grace, O Lord God Almighty, that they may blossom. See that our presence here to-day is proof that we have not forgotten God, His laws, His will.

And as even to the weak, the erring, and the foolish, the Lord did come, so to us, waiting before Thee to-day, to be holier, nobler, and more true, come with Thy Spirit and touch us. Out of Thy All-seeingness comfort us and make us glad.

Lord God Almighty! we call Thee the Changeless. We rejoice in Thee, that Thou changest never. We watch the world, flaunting its empty and foolish honours, now on one, now on another; voices that lifted up a storm of praise about a patriot, quite as prompt to praise a tyrant; now singing Hosannas to Christ, then calling for Barabbas. We see men, passionate for good now, now passionate for evil; driven about like the

full-eared cornfield in the wind; carried hither and thither like a troubled sea; to-day we are for the Lord, to-morrow for Mammon; tossed by prejudice, driven aside by desire, changing ever.

We turn then, to Thee, O Lord! Thou hast never changed; Thy purposes are the same; Thy ends the same; the same ever Thy love and grace. O God! our God! our changeless God! we come to Thee, and call Thee changeless; changeless in Thy might and love; ever giving, and ever to give; never weary, always ready.

We call Thee the Pitiful! full of mercy; Lord! pity us. We come unto Thee, we bring the burden of our sins and put it on Thy mercy, and it is forgiven. Thou knowest us altogether, —our sad weaknesses, and canst pity us. Thou lookest, and seest that we blame ourselves, that when we could do good or evil, we choose the evil. Thou lookest on what has made us so. Thou lookest on all the things that went before, that made us weak when we should have been strong; up to the earliest Thou dost go; all the kinships, all the thousand influences of creed and story; all that our fathers did and suffered; all the great peoples that have mingled to make us this nation. Comfort us, then, O Lord, with

Thy All-mercifulness; bless us by Thy pity; and make us strong and glad this day.

And let us go through Thy Names; count them over, as by the saints they were given: Rock of Defence; Strong Tower; Mighty Refuge; Shadow of a great Rock in a weary land; Fountain in a dry place; Light, and Love: and may we know Thee to be all these things.

Let Thine eyes turn where ours go; follow us to the temple; go with us to the house; be with us in living, be with us in dying; go not from us dead; and as we are immortal, make us Thine here, that we may be Thine hereafter. Make us glad according to Thy tender mercy.

O Lord God of Nations! that makest all men of one blood, look upon ours. O Lord! the days are evil, our hearts sick, our souls sad. The old glory seems departed, as if the sun had set behind our Jerusalem—going to some other land to bless it with its beams. If it is to go down, O Lord! Thy Will be done! but, before we do go, send some young nation that may comfort us in our fall, as was comforted Simeon of old; and let us say, "Now let us depart in peace." There is another nation, cradled in our arms, founded on our laws, speaking our old tongue, walking in our ways. Bless the

young blood; subdue their vanity, cleanse them from sin, overcome their iniquities, overthrow their wicked love of Mammon, make them great. And if we must be added to the list of fallen empires—if we must go where Persia went and Jewry followed, where Greece departed and Rome went down—before we go, lay that young people in our arms, and let us go down to the grave of nations still blessing God.

But if it be Thy will that we shall not yet be blotted out; if it please Thee to bring life out of death, that out of the dead lion shall come the honey-swarm; if it be possible, yet, O Lord, wake this nation up once more. Let us ask each other what we have done to lift it out of its trance. Let the nation know what makes a nation great; that it has been wandering from Thee, looking upon merchandise as glory, and wealth as the only good. Thou hast listened to our speech, and it has rung with the songs of Mammon's temple; men pointed to their money, and counted up the number of their ships. Tyre was mighty, Carthage was great, and Rome famous; but they fell, as we shall surely fall also.

Wake up the Nation, O Lord, to the faith that the saving things of olden nations were not their

wealth, their merchandise, their worldly pomp, but their grace, their spirit, and their truth. Let us remember the holy teachings of the past, the story of old times.

What outlived the bloom of Greece? Her great thoughts, noble patriotism, great self-sacrifices. What outlived the power of Rome? Her great acts, great laws, mighty deeds of order and obedience. Wake us up, so that becoming noble ourselves, we may lend to our land the grace of true citizenship, of goodness, and of truth.

Bless, O Lord, those that unto the prayers of the sanctuary would wish to add their little rill of private sorrows and private joys. Let them that mourn death find comfort in Thee. Give to the sick, strength, that they may praise Thee; bless those that rejoice in recovery, that their strength may be made to render more service unto God. Hear these our prayers, and answer as we offer them, in the name of Jesus Christ.—AMEN.

In Time of War.

ALMIGHTY GOD! we seem to live in two worlds, and these worlds are so strangely unlike! Round us Thou hast put all beauty, all fairness and fruitfulness. Generations of men have looked upon the glories of this world of Thine with eyes of love and wonder. And the world fades not, and grows not old. Above, Thou hast put the lights of heaven: how marvellous bright they be! Below are the mighty hills, the glorious sea. Thou hast filled the air with music, the world with treasures. This world of Thine seems fit for Thine own tread, as in the early days, when man did not mar its beauties, and Thou didst walk in the Garden, and lovedst Thy works. Thou didst place men upon it, great in life, great in deed. What words they sang! what works they taught! Beside them Thou makest us feel humble, poor, and pitiful. How great their tongue in praise, how lovely in their might, how exalted in their glory!

We look, then, O Lord, upon this world and the great men Thou hast put upon it in the olden time; great in words, great in deeds, mighty in holy things; and then we look upon ourselves;

how poor and downfallen we be! We look among ourselves. There are many of us here, whose thoughts wander to every new-comer; who come to Thy house to gaze and to be gazed upon, rather than marvellously to adore. We watch ourselves; and see how little a thing can take the heart from God. There are some, through whose minds, even during Thy glorious praises, have flitted all foolishness, levity, and frivolity.

Hear our confession with shame, that it is hard to look upon the heavens for even one brief hour. Cure us, O Lord, by showing us the awful beauty of life, the dread significance of death. May the brightness of heaven tell us of life; the blackness of storm prophesy of the grave. Look on us, Lord God, in mercy, and save us. See us with laggard feet, slow to come to the house of God; with wandering eyes, thoughts far off, tongues dumb, taking no part in Thy praise, with cold hearts, unquickened by the warm words of the men of old. Take us, O Lord! in our feebleness, bear with us in our coldness, reclaim us from wandering, and help us to cry to Thee.

We cry to Thee for the inward blessing. Without it, what can we do? What is all the world's beauty, what its glories, but food to one that hath no

hunger, beauty to the blind, music to the heavy-hearted, the merry laughter of the child to the man cast down in spirit? These give no joy.

But do Thou give the inward peace that maketh the outward things more fair, our life more beautiful, and death less sad; that taketh away our many cares, the vexations that are so little yet provoke us so much, the thorns in the flesh that trouble us, the sand in our eyes which are blinded by the pettinesses of life.

Show us how great men have walked in hostile places, how nobly they suffered, how boldly they died. Show us Paul, troubled with thorns, with humiliation, with pain and weakness, holding steadily on his way to God; lifting up the wondrous cross of Jesus Christ.

Teach us how great men have languished in prison, what wondrous thoughts have come from behind prison-walls. Let us hear David from Mizar's hill, crying unto God; and Samuel serving Thee, though but a servant in a king's house. Show us all the great souls fighting for God; the mighty men dying like true soldiers of Christ; Peter the fisherman, Paul the tent-maker, Matthew the receiver of taxes.

Give us, then, the inward peace that maketh

men mighty. O Lord God! look upon all of us in time of trouble, whether national or individual. We have heard of terrible things. We mourn this day over the many of our countrymen who have fallen in battle, whose bones will never come back to the dear old land. If these things must be, fill our hearts with calmness, fortitude, and power. O Lord! if it be Thy Will, still we cry:—Give us peace, in Thy good time; but still we cry, as before, Give us righteousness and justice first, and then peace. We pray not Thy blessing for the wrong. Let the good cause flourish. Continue Thy mighty war against the tyrant, the proud, and ungodly of the earth; humble the oppressor, bring low the unjust. Let liberty, true liberty, govern the world.

In Thy might arise, O God! bring down the mighty lies of the time. Look on those to whose hearts the fall of countrymen brings no pang; who hear the sad story and have no tear. Pardon those that feel no righteous wrath, when treachery, sinfulness, cruelty, and brutality are done in the world; that can feel no indignation for the doings of a king, because he is a king; that can bring one criminal to punishment for a single crime, but has no justice for him who commits many, and that give him, instead, feasting and flattery.

Fill us with a passionate love for right against wrong, for truth against a lie. Measure our patriotism by our love of right. Make us full of Thy love, that so we may be soldiers of light, love, liberty, and truth; fighters against all that would oppose Thee.

Bless this earth, O Lord! Look upon those that suffer. Restore liberty to the world. Bless the exile, bless the sad, bless the prisoner.

Look on those in sickness and sadness, whether sad in soul, body, or estate. Accept the thanksgiving of those that have, by Thy goodness, cause to rejoice; and let them and all of us ever feel and say, "God is great, His Will be done, His name be praised, now and for evermore."—AMEN.

For a School.

ALMIGHTY GOD! Who by our Lord Jesus Christ hath taught us to call Thee Our Father, hear our humble and hearty thanks for the many mercies which Thy fatherly love hath given to us. Keep us this day; make us the children, not of Thy power only, but of Thy will and Thy love. Help us to know Thy will, and to do it.

Help us to govern our tempers, that we may live in love with all about us. Help us to obey those who have to rule over us; to do what we are bidden to do cheerfully and well.

What our hands find to do, may we do with our might. Bless us in work-time and in play-time. May we remember the words of our Lord,

"I must work the works of Him that sent me, while it is day: the night cometh, when no man can work."

Teach us to know, and deeply to feel, that Thou art God, Who will "render unto every man according to his deeds; to them who, by patient continuance in well-doing, seek for glory and honour and immortality,—eternal Life."

May our rest fit us for our work; our work make us ready for our rest. Bless us in our learning; may it fit us for all the duties of our life, present and to come. Bless our homes, and all therein; bless all who love us. May our friends be Thy friends. Bless all in this house, and help each to do the duty of the station to which Thou hast called them. Bless the poor; give to them and to us the heavenly riches. Above all, give us to know the glad tidings of the Gospel of Thy Son.

Forgive us our sins; redeem our souls; guide us in life, comfort us in death, and afterwards receive us into glory.—AMEN.

Prayer for a Wife.

HEAVENLY FATHER! I bless Thee for Thy great gift of one to love, and to be beloved by. May this our sweet earthly love be kept ever bright and true by Thy heavenly love, and may this earthly love, so close, so easy to be felt and seen, help us to rise to the knowledge of Thy Love Divine.

Make me a comfort and a help to him whose name I bear; in the day of his weariness make me his rest; in the day of his wickedness, should such a day come, help me to show forth to him the repentance for sin and the pardon thereof. Of all his true joys make me a glad partaker; of all his sorrows make me to share; that so his burdens may be lightened. Help us to govern our household in the Name, and by the Law, of God. Bless the work of our hands. Guide us in life; be with us in death. Receive us together into the land of peace, there to abide with Thee for evermore, through Jesus Christ our Lord.—AMEN.

Before a Discourse on the Sudden Deaths of the Young.

ALMIGHTY GOD! search and try whether our hearts, as our tongues have just done, sing the song that "Thy mercy endureth for ever." Almighty God! Thou knowest how plain it is that Thou art merciful when Thy work is for our pleasure, and Thy hand is full of gifts. When the gifts are bountiful, how easy it is to sing the song of God! In the light of love, how easy to sing Thy praise! How easy to sing the song of trust in the days of peace!

But, we beseech Thee, that Thou wouldst give us a deeper trust, a firmer faith, a more living love, a larger life, a deeper spirit; so that when the cloud is over us, and the storm is raging, and the brightness is gone, and our fair flowers are wind-scattered, and our fruit of promise so blighted that it falls all too soon, unripe, ungathered, ungarnered, unblest; when the night is long, and the day is dark; when the soul is weary, and the lustre of the eyes is fading; when the heart goes down and the spirit sinks; when faith is feeble and hope is gone;—in these dark nights

and times, help us then still to say, "For His mercy endureth for ever."

Give us such vision at times into the deep things behind all change, the eternal things that never vary, the love that knows no lapsing, the truth that knows no tide, the wisdom that is never clouded over with doubt, the guidance never for one moment failing, that we may be enabled to see the passing cloud, to listen to the storm, to see the fruit fall, to behold the summer blighted, to mark the harvest of life all mildewed, and yet, piercing behind these things, see Thine unshaken throne, Thy changeless will, Thine undoubted love.

Lord God! at all times may we take up the strain, "For His mercy endureth for ever." When we tell to one another of Thy blessings, may we say, "For His mercy endureth for ever," and when we speak of Thy deliverances, may we say, "For His mercy endureth for ever;" then grant unto us that when we tell of suffering and sin, of sadness and sorrow, of blight and storm, of fall and decay, of thunder and tempest, of the dreadful things of life, that ours may be the voice that shall take up still the strain, not so gladsome and yet more deep, not so joyous and yet even deeper in true

joy, "For His mercy endureth for ever." Until we reach that, O Lord, lead us kindly on; until our faith be full, try us, bless us, govern us; and then, when faith is full, then shall we say, "Though He slay me, yet will I trust in Him." Then shall we know the eternal peace; then shall we, with quiet heart, look forward to the day, when passing beyond the power of time to vex or change, we shall live in the unbroken calm of the heavenly land, and in the Light of Thy countenance for evermore.

Of Thy mercy teach these things to those that mourn for the dead, that they may not mourn as those that have no hope, but, looking longingly forward to see, if it were possible, those that have gone before, and beholding them not, they may but look on them as having passed out of sight of this dim valley, and desire that their feet may follow them, until, gaining the Everlasting Hills, from the Delectable Mountains they may behold those that they have loved and lost. To all to whom Thou hast given sorrow and trouble, give Thy balm and mercy. Guide and govern us all in all our fainting and falling; and of Thy mercy, not of our merit; of Thy pity, not of our perseverance; of Thy large allowance, not of our at-

tainment, grant that we may come at last into the land of the unfading years.

Hear us of Thy mercy, through Jesus Christ our Lord.—AMEN.

A Prayer by the Death-bed of an old Friend, in the presence of her children.

(*After Communion.*)

O LORD GOD! Heavenly Father, Ruler of all things, Thou Who dost govern the worlds! yet listen to the cry of a solitary child. Have mercy upon us all. Have mercy upon this Thy child—our sister—for she is about to leave the things that are seen, and is fast verging into the things that are not seen. May she fall asleep in Thee. Grant that we may follow her, in so far as she has followed Christ. We give Thee thanks for all the mercies that have surrounded us from our childhood,—for all in her that has been according to Thy will. We pray Thee that sorrow may strengthen us, and trouble make us pure; and we beseech Thee give to this Thy servant a happy deliverance out of the storms and troubles of this world, into the Rest that remaineth for Thy saints.

May none of us fail of that Rest. We thank Thee that once again we have drunk of this cup. Fit us all to drink of that other cup of which the Lord drank.—AMEN.

The Same.

(*Before Parting.*)

O LORD GOD! most merciful, we come to Thee. O Lord, there are many things about Thee that we cannot understand; but this we know, on this we lean—God so loved the world that He sent His only-begotten Son to die for us. Thou willest not the death of any sinner; Thou willest that all should live. Grant, O Lord, unto this Thy child, now lying in wasting and weariness, drawing nigh unto the close of her mortal life—grant unto her to know Thy lovingkindness. May the blessed peace of God take possession of her. Be Thou with her, even unto the end, and afterward give unto her a crown of life. May she feel as one of old did, the Lord is her Shepherd, therefore she shall not want. Lead her by the still waters. May Thy rod and Thy staff comfort her. And look upon us all in Thy love; not in the love we bear to Thee,

but in Thy love towards us, and fit us all for Thy Rest, through Jesus Christ our Lord.—AMEN.

"The joy of the Lord is your strength."—NEH. viii. 10.

ALMIGHTY! not with a trust that has never known trembling, not with a faith that has never known fainting, have we put our trust in Thee, O God! But we have at times trusted in Thee; yea, when it has been dark we have trusted in Thee. In the valley of the Shadow of Death, in the hour of sickness, and in the time of mortal pain, we have trusted in Thee. Let us never be confounded. Teach us that heavenly trust is earthly strength, that they who put their trust in Thee never can be confounded. We beseech Thee, if this trust of ours has been too broken, that it may, in the years to come, be constant, confiding, secure. Let it borrow from Thy steadfastness. Like some earthly loves that we have trusted (for there have been some loves in life that the more we knew the more we trusted) let our poor wavering faith gain constancy from Thee. May our faith grow constant because it is in Thee; so may our trust be constant because it is in the unchang-

ing God. Grant that oft-times we may meditate upon Thy changelessness. For even when we know Thee least we know this much of Thee, that Thou art ever the same. Let not these poor waves of mortal feeling rise so high, or sink so deep, as to make us think that Thou changest. Let the light of God be with us when the tide of life is low, and when we ride high upon the crests of joy. Let nothing shake us, because our trust is in the unshaken joy of God. Sorrow is hard, and pain is sad. It kills and mars. We want Thy joy. Thou knowest what the sunshine is to us and to all that Thou hast made. The child grows and the birds carol and all things grow fruitful when the sunshine is upon them. Lord God! without Thy joy how shall these sweetnesses come forth? Give us the Joy of God. One hath written of "the oil of gladness." We need it. Grant unto us wise gladness, the joy that passeth the test of time. Forgive us if we have followed the mourning crowd who disfigure by their faithlessness the glorious portal through which man passes to God the Lover, unto His Rest. Let us have the oil of gladness in the hour of death, the risen Christ, the stone rolled away. Let us hear the words, "I am the Resurrection and the Life," that when the day shall

come when this little lease of our life is out and it is time to go, we may do so without fear and without fainting. And when we hear the bell that tells us the Heavenly supper is about to begin, let us hear the blessed cry that came to those whose lamps were found burning, "Arise, the Bridegroom cometh!" Lord God! when the Heavenly bridegroom shall come for us, with quick step and joyous soul let us arise, that we may be of the happy number who shall sit for ever at the eternal banquet of God. Lord God! if these things seem hard for us let the dead help to instruct us. Teach us that they are not closer to Thee than we are, but in a happier clime, for there the sunshine is brighter. When the day comes round upon which we mourn those that are dead, and count up, as oft-times we do, the number of those that have loved us and are gone to rest, and see the places that none can fill, and "sigh for the touch of a vanished hand, and the sound of a voice that is still," and miss the sweet windows through which God hath looked upon us through the dearest eyes that ever we have known, then,—Lord God! anoint us with the oil of gladness, then teach us that adown the same dark path we too shall tread, and help us to say, as we get near to it, "Though I

walk through the valley of the Shadow of Death I will fear no evil: for Thou art with me; Thy rod and Thy staff they comfort me." Do this for us and more. Bring us at last, through Thy grace, unto the quiet death of a trusting soul and the glory of Thy redeemed children. Hear these our supplications, we beseech Thee, through Jesus Christ our Lord.—AMEN.



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